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ABSTRACT

This publication features an article about Milton M. Holland, a black American from East Texas, who is credited with being the first black Texan to have won the Congressional Medal of Honor during the U.S. Civil War. The articles in the issue concern Milton Holland and other black Americans who served in the Civil War. The articles include: "Milton M. Holland" (Archie P. McDonald); "Interview with Dorothy Franks" (Loblolly staff); "The Afro American Texans" (Institute of Texan Cultures); "The Badge of Gallantry" (Joseph P. Mitchell); "The Congressional Medal of Honor" (Ohio Historical Research Society); "Individual Decorations of the Civil War and Earlier" (John Wike); "The Heights of Glory" (Robert A. Webb); "From Slavery to Freedom" (Frank R. Levstik); and "Politician and Educator" (Frank R. Levstik). (DB)

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Panola County Recipient of The Medal of Honor

Milton M. Holland

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Intro to the Loblolly

We first came upon Milton M. Holland at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. In a section entitled "Black Texans," an exhibit of him was on display. Since it stated that he was the first black Texan to win the Congressional Medal of Honor, it intrigued us to see that he was born near Carthage, Texas. With what little information we had, we decided to follow up on this potential story. Archie P. McDonald, a Cival War expert from S.F.A., sent us a copy of an article he wrote about Milton. In Tyler, we interviewed Dorothy Franks, a descendent of Milton, and the Holland family historian. The Institute of Texan Cultures, Ohio Historical Society, the National Archives, and Robert A. Webb of the Washington Post sent us articles on Milton which proved to be useful in our research. We also received an article entitled "Individual Decorations of the Civil War and Earlier" by John Wike that includes information on Milton's success. Our final source was Frank R. Levitik who wrote an article called "From Slavery to Freedom" on Milton and also wrote an article on his brother William. All of these articles confirm his heroism. He took charge of his infantry company directly after all the commanding officers were killed in the battle. Under his inspiring leadership they were successful and his gallantry shown through. We are honored to be able to present to you, the story of an unsung hero in American history from Panola County.

MILTON M. HOLLAND

by

Archie P. McDonald

Dr. Archie McDonald teaches history at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. He is a Civil War scholar and an expert on the role of Texans in American history. He shared his thoughts and insight on the role of Milton Holland and Black Americans in the Civil War.

Terms such as "gallantry," and "service above and beyond the call of duty" characterize military decorations, especially the highest decoration available to a member of the United States armed services. Probably few who win them, especially the Medal of Honor, set out to do so. Instead, they usually find themselves in a circumstance that demands decisiveness and aggressive action, and often without thinking, they perform some act that endangers their won life to save another or to fulfill a mission. Afterwards, they sometimes have only a vague recollection of what they have done, perhaps even remember it in the mind's eye as if they were an observer rather than the principal participant.

Milton M. Holland won such a medal during the American Civil War, and is credited with being the first black Texan to do so. The decoration itself was nearly as new as the service of blacks in America's armed forces, who were not permitted to serve as active members of the nation's military units until 1863. In the beginning, this medal was given for actions that later would bring only lesser citations. But even then, some received the award for activities "above and beyond the call of duty" that would have won the honor at any time. Probably Milton Holland is in that latter group, and he performed his service at a time when blacks could receive it. Doris Miller of Waco performed an act of heroism of equal status at Pearl Harbor in 1941,

but did not receive the honor because of racial attitudes at the time. But Holland's heroism exhibited itself during a war which resulted in the freedom of blacks from slavery, and he deserved the recognition he won.

Holland was born on August 1, 1844 on a farm in the vicinity of Carthage, Texas. He and two brothers became the chattel property of Bird Holland, a state official, who sent them to be schooled at Albany Enterprise Academy in Ohio in the late 1850's. When the Civil War began, Holland attempted to enlist in the army, but was turned down. Older sources site his seventeen years of age as the reason, but in fact persons of color were not permitted to serve in the army then. This became an issued hotly disputed by the black emancipationist Fredrick Douglass, among others, who argued that blacks should be allowed to fight for their own freedom. But President Abraham Lincoln maintained until 1863 that the war was for Union only, not freedom for slaves, and the Congress agreed in the Crittenden Resolution.

As time passed, more Americans saw the war as an effort to preserve the Union and to free slaves. The First and Second Confiscation acts advanced that position, and General John C. Fremont and General Benjamin Butler, among others, advocated the use of blacks in the ranks-some because they thought blacks deserved the opportunity to be there, and some because their soldiering might prevent a white from having to serve. After Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, blacks were permitted to enlist, and eventually approximately 400,000 black Americans did join in the Union Army during the Civil War, and many, the famed "Buffalo Soldiers," served on the frontier afterwards.

Young Holland could not wait for these events. He accepted a servant's position with Colonel Nelson H. VanVorhes, an officer in several Ohio regiments during the first years of the war, and on June 22, 1863, was accepted into the army himself. There he had an uneven experience, alternately advancing to sergeant major, and just as percipitiously being reduced

to private.

Holland's acts of valor that led to his receiving the Medal of Honor occurred during the Wilderness Campaign of 1864 and the siege of Petersburg that followed. Previously, he had served under Butler in North Carolina. During the final campaign, Holland was once again a first sergeant in Company "C," Fifth United States Colored Troops. At Chaffins Farm, on September 29, 1864, in what is styled the Battle of New Market Heights, his unit was ordered to assault a Confederate position. When all of its white officers were felled, Holland assumed command and continue to lead his company in the assault despite receiving a wound. Afterwards, Butler claimed that he would have appointed Holland a brigadier-general if he had had the power to do so. Holland was employed by the United States Government in the Auditor's Office, eventually serving as chief of collections for the Sixth District. Before the end of the century he founded the Alpha Insurance Company in Washington, D.C., one of the earliest insurance companies in the nation owned by a black. He died following a heart attack on May 15, 1910.

Holland received one of the four medals of honor by members of Fifth U.S. Colored Troops, and one of the sixteen awarded to blacks during the Civil War. Like many others, blacks and whites, his contribution was forgotten in the aftermath of the war. Only in the modern period, when the efforts toward nation building made by many of different colors, different religions, or different national origins have received more recognition, has he received his due. And even Doris Miller is now recognized through a large picture with a caption explaining his heroism that is on display at the monument at Pearl Harbor. Holland's progress from slavery to military service, government service, and finally to success in the business world, is a remarkable record.

There was some controversy as to where Milton M. Holland was born. Some say in Austin, Texas where as others say near Carthage, Texas in Panola County. The following documents are signed by Holland attesting to the fact that he was actually born near Carthage, Texas.

Act of June 27, 1890, as amended by act of May 9, 1900.

DECLARATION FOR INVALID PENSION.

RECEIVED AUG 31

STATE OF District of Columbia }
COUNTY OF Washington } ss:

On this 2nd day of August, A. D. one thousand nine hundred and six personally appeared before me, a Notary Public within and for the county and State aforesaid, Milton M. Holland, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is 62 years of age, and a resident of Silver Spring, county of Montgomery, State of Maryland, and that he is the identical person who was ENROLLED at Delaware, Ohio under the name of Milton M. Holland on the 22d day of June, 1863, as a Private in Co. K, 5th Regt. United States Colored Troops

(If a soldier, and sailor, and marine, and regiment in the Army, or vessel, if in the Navy.)

in the service of the United States, in the war of the rebellion, and served at least ninety days and was HONORABLY DISCHARGED at Carolina City, North Carolina on the 20th day of September 1865. That he DESERTED [illegible] No other service

(Here give a complete statement of all other service, if any.)

That he was not employed in the military or naval service of the United States otherwise than as stated above. That his personal description at enlistment was as follows: Height, 5 feet 8 inches; complexion, Yellow; color of eyes, Brown; color of hair, Black; that his occupation was Shoemaker; that he was born August 1st, 1844, at or near Carthage, Scotch County, Texas.

That his several places of residence since leaving the service have been as follows: Charles Town, W. Va. Oct 1865 to Nov 1866. Albany, Athens Co. Ohio Nov to Oct 1866. Columbus, Ohio Oct 1866 to June 1869. Washington, D.C. June 1869 to August 1902. Silver Spring, Maryland August 1902 to date.

(Whether or personally.)

That he is suffering from disability of a permanent character, not the result of his own vicious habits, which incapacitates him for the performance of manual labor in such a degree as to render him unable to earn a support, to wit: On account of age.

(Here state cause of disability, as age, or name of disease, or nature of injury.)

That he is not a pensioner. That he has heretofore applied for pension for defective hearing but does not recall date nor Number of Case

(If a pensioner, the certificate number only need be given. If not, give the number of the former application, if one was made.)

That he makes this declaration for the purpose of being placed on the pension roll of the United States under the provisions of the act of June 27, 1890, as amended by the act of May 9, 1900.

That his POST-OFFICE ADDRESS is Silver Spring, county of Montgomery, State of Maryland.

That he hereby appoints [illegible]

(If he desires to employ an attorney.)

of [illegible], his true and lawful attorney to prosecute his claim.

Milton M Holland

(Claimant's signature in full.)

Attest: (1) Geo. W. Jackson.

(2) [illegible]

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Commissioner.

1. Where were you born? Answer.
2. Where did you enlist? Answer.
3. Where had you lived before you enlisted? Answer.
4. What was your occupation? Answer.
5. Were you a slave? If so, state the names of all former owners, and particularly the name of your owner at the date of your enlistment.
6. Where were you discharged? Answer.
7. Where have you lived since discharge? Give dates, as nearly as possible, of any changes of residence.
8. What is your present occupation? Answer.
9. What is your height? feet, inches. The color of your eyes? Are there any permanent marks or scars on your person? If so, describe them.
10. Were you in the military or naval service under a name different from that by which you are now known? If so, state what it was.
11. Have you ever been known by any names other than that given in your signature? If so, state them in full.
12. By what name are you now known? State in full.
13. What is your actual residence at the present time and what is the street and number? Answer.

U. S. Pension Agency
Aug 7 1906
Office

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Pages are from the Service Record of Milton Holland during the Civil War as a member of the 5th U.S. Colored Infantry of Ohio. He joined as a 19 year old Private in June, 1863, and was mustered out as First Sergeant in September, 1865.

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

U.S.C.T.

M. Holland

Reg't U. S. Col'd Infantry.

Field and Staff Muster Roll

Sept – Oct ....., 1864.

Present ... Present

Stoppages, $ ... 100 for .....

Due Gov't, $ ... 100 for .....

Valuation of horse, $ ... 100

Valuation of horse equipments, $ ... 100

Remarks: Additional pay due from June 1st '63 to Feb. 20th '64 as 2nd Sgt. Present or before Apr 19th for Promoted 1st Sgt May 1st '64 and transferred from Co. C. per Sept 30 '64

Book mark: .....

Present

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D AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

5 U.S.C.T.

Milton M Holland

1st Sergt., Co. C, 5 Reg't U. S. Col'd Infantry.

Appears on Co. Muster-out Roll, dated

Carolina City N.C., Sept 22 1865

Muster-out to date Sept 22nd 1865

Last paid to Apr 30th 1865

Clothing account:

Last settled June 30th 1864; drawn since $ ... 100

Due soldier $ ... 100; due U. S. $ ... 100

Am't for cloth'g in kind or money adv'd $ ... 100

Due U. S. for arms, equipments, &c., $ ... 00

Bounty paid $ ... 100; due $ ... 100

Remarks: Promoted 1st Sergt Nov 3rd '63 Re-enlisted Veteran 1st Sergt Regulated Sept 30th 1864 from date of muster to Co. Muster out and transportation not furnished

Book mark: Dec 31 1864 Present

Present

(501) 1st Sergt Copyist

H | 5 | U.S.C.T.

Milton M Hollaard

Pvt, Co. A 127 Reg't Ohio Col'd Infantry.*

Age 19 years.

Appears on

Company Muster-in Roll

of the organization named above. Roll dated Camp Delaware Ohio Aug 29, 1863.

Muster-in to date January, 1863

Joined for duty and enrolled:

When January 26, 1863.

Where Athens O.

Period 3 years.

Remarks:

* This organization subsequently became Co. C, 5 Reg't U. S. Colored Infantry.

Book mark:

L. E. Edwards

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REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

H | 5 | U.S.C.T.

Milton M Hollaard

Sgt, Co. C, 5 Reg't U. S. Col'd Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for Nov & Dec, 1863.

Present or absent Present

Stoppage, $ 100 for

Due Gov't, $ 100 for

Remarks:

Book mark:

L. E. Edwards

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The following is an interview with Dorotny Franks, who is the Holland family historian. We went to see her in Tyler, in order to establish a connection between the Hollands of East Texas and Milton Holland. She was a great help with our research and confirmed Milton Holland's roots in Panola County.

Interview with Dorothy Franks

Q: You are the Holland family historian, correct?

A: Yes, that's the title I'm given.

Q: Could you tell us a little about the family before the Civil War?

A: I'm tracing the family, and we've only found information back to 1866. Prior to the Civil War, I have only found sketches of Major Spearman Holland, who came to Panola County from Mississippi.

Q: Was Spearman Holland white?

A: Yes, and he brought slaves with him who took his name later.

Q: How did Bird Holland fit into this?

A: Unless I have my documents with me I'm not sure. He was the Secretary of State of Texas, and was later killed in the Civil War fighting for the Confederacy. Bird was either Spearman's son or brother. He was also white.

Q: So Bird and Spearman were related?

A: Yes, also in the bill of sale that I did find at the Carthage Courthouse, dated 1844, was where the name Marshall Holland came up. I think Marshall, William, James and Milton were brothers. Bird purchased James, William, and Milton from his brother or father at that time. Bird sent them to Athens County, Ohio before the Civil War. William moved back to Austin after the war. Milton stayed in Ohio. Because Milton didn't come back to Texas is why we don't have a lot of information on him.

Q: Did William come back to Texas after the war

H | 5 | U.S.C.T.

William M. Holland

Sergt. Co. C 127 Reg't Ohio Col'd Infantry.*

Age 19 years.

Appears on

Company Muster-in Roll

of the organization named above. Roll dated Camp Delaware Ohio July 28, 1863.

Muster-in to date June 25, 1863

Joined for duty and enrolled:

When June 25, 1863.

Where Athens O.

Period 3 years.

Remarks:

* This organization subsequently became Co. C, 5 Reg't U. S. Colored Infantry.

Book mark:

L. G. Edwards

(356) Copyist.

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

H | 5 | U.S.C.T.

William M. Holland

Sergt. Co. C, 5 Reg't U. S. Col'd Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for Nov & Dec, 1863.

Present or absent Present

Stoppage, $ 100 for

Due Gov't, $ 100 for

Remarks:

Book mark:

L. G. Edwards

(356) Copyist.

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Q: Did William come back to Texas after the war

Left to right-Dorothy Franks, Melissa Essary, and Marianne Dill

and was he in the State Legislature?

A: Yes, he came back, and was in the State Legislature.

Q: Was William the first black Legislator in Texas?

A: That's correct. He represented Waller County, which is west of Houston.

Q: Who sent you the article on William?

A: To be exact, I received that article from the lady who runs the Harrison County Historical Society.

Q: Is that in Marshall?

A: Yes, on the 3rd floor of the courthouse hangs a picture of William Holland.

Q: Was Milton Holland born near Carthage?

A: Yes, I say near Carthage. Holland's quarters is about five miles away.

Q: Milton, William, and James were Bird's sons. Who was their mother?

A: We don't have any information on her.

Q: Would their mother have been a slave?

A: Yes, she probably would have.

Q: Could Milton leaving and never coming back be the reason that he's not remembered?

A: Yes, it could.

Q: Was Milton the first black Texan to win the medal of honor?

A: Yes, he was.

Q: The last Holland reunion was in 1990. Regarding the three brothers, who was the most remembered?

A: William Holland, because he was the one that returned to Texas.

Q: Does anyone have any memories of Milton Holland?

A: No, they just know the name.

Q: Would it make sense that Bird took the brothers to the North to give them a better chance of life?

A: I'm sure that's why.

Q: As we put more pieces of the puzzle together, what do you think the legacy of Milton will be to the Holland children?

A: It will instill in us some pride, something that our culture has been without for over 100 years. It just helps to know that somebody in your family made a contribution to society. It will give us motivation to do the same, and hopefully give us higher objectives and goals. That is needed more than anything I know.

left to right: Travis Holland - Grandson of marshall Holland - Dorothy Franks, and Charles Holland - Grandson of Marshall Holland.

The following material was sent to us by the library at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio.

The Afro American Texans

Milton M. Holland
1864

Milton M. Holland was the first black Texan to win the Medal of Honor. He was born August 1, 1844, on a small farm near Carthage in Panola County, Texas. Apparently he moved to Ohio at an early age, for he was attending school in Athens County when the first call came for Union army volunteers in 1861. He was rejected because of his youth. Undaunted, he obtained civilian employment in the Quartermaster Corps. He served in this capacity until he was mustered into the Union forces on June 22, 1863, at Delaware, Ohio. Assigned to the Fifth United State Colored Troops commanded by General Benjamin F. Butler, Holland saw considerable action in the swamps of North Carolina "capturing forage and emancipating slaves" under the recent Emancipation Proclamation. His unit also was involved in several actions to liberate Union prisoners of war.

As First Sergeant of Company "C.", Holland was with the James River fleet in its advance on Richmond, when his company was ordered to make the attack. They struck the first blow at Petersburg by capturing the Confederate flag, the signal station and the officers at the station. In September 1864 his regiment was in front of Richmond at Deep Bottom, where he, as Sergeant Major, led his unit in a brilliant and daring fight. With the officers all dead or wounded, Holland took command and led the troops in the battle at Chaffin's Farm (a part of the Gilmer). He was wounded, as were many in his unit, but he continued to fight. Holland led a charge on Fort Harrison later the same day to help a white brigade get back to Union lines. He was subsequently awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for leadership and bravery.

After the war he married Virginia Dickey in

Columbus, Ohio. Later he was employed by the United States Post Office Department and eventually assumed an executive position with the agency's head-quarters in Washington, D.C. Holland and his wife moved to a small farm near Silver Spring, Maryland, where he died in 1910.

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This selection is from The Badge of Gallantry by Lt. Col. Joseph P. Mitchell. It is a book on Civil War veterans who won the Medal of Honor.

The Badge of Gallantry

A long letter came from a member of the 2nd brigade, 3rd Division, Eighteenth Corps. By coincidence, Milton M. Holland, 5th United States Colored Troops, had also been a sergeant major, the highest rank that a Negro could then officially attain in the United States Army.

The letter gives an account of his entire service but, in describing the action at Chaffin's Farm, it is not too specific as to his own part. Milton Holland preferred to dwell instead upon the valor of the entire regiment. His personal citation was for taking command of Company C when the other offficers had been killed or wounded.

"Milton M. Holland was born in the state of Texas in 1844. He was attending school in Athens County, Ohio, in 1861 when the first call was made for volunteer soldiers, and respond to the call of his country. He enlisted in the Union Army in April, 1861, but was rejected on account of his youth. But so determined was he to serve his country that he immediately sought employment in the Quartermaster Department and served under Colonel Nelson H. Van Vorhes of the 3rd, 18th, and 92nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

"He served in this capacity until he was regularly mustered into the Union Army in June, 1863 and assigned to the 5th United States Colored Troops, a regiment raised in Ohio and accredited to that state. With his regiment he engaged in the campaigns in Virginia and North Carolina under the command of General B.F. Butler. In the winter of 1863 he was with his regiment in the raid through the Dismal Swamp into North Carolina, capturing forage and emancipating slaves under the then recent Emancipation Proclamation.

"In the early winter and spring of 1864, he was with his regiment in the two raids from

Yorktown, Virginia to Bottom's Bridge just outside Richmond: the first raid being made for the purpose of liberating the Union prisoners confined at Libby Prison; and the second for the purpose of assisting General Kilpatrick who, in his attempt to relieve the Libby Prison men, had been surrounded by the
Confederate forces.

"He was with the James River fleet in its advance on Richmond and, as the fleet approached City Point, Company C, of which Holland was then the 1st Sergeant, was ordered to make the attack. The order was promptly obeyed and, without landing the vessel, the men jumped from the guard rail of the boat, wading water waist deep to reach the point of attack. They captured the Rebel flag, the signal station and signal officers of the confederacy, thus stricking the first signal blow at the Rebel stronghold at Petersburg.

"This regiment was part of the famous Black Brigade which General Smith at first refused to use in his charge on Petersburg on June 15, 1864. General Butler, commanding the corps, promptly ordered General Smith to march on Petersburg and storm her breastworks. General Smith led the black phalanx in the charge, and for the courage, the heroism, the daring and skill displayed by the colored troops in that bloody fight, General Smith remarked that he would lead men like those into any fight and rely upon their pluck.

"His regiment was at the 'Mine Explosion' on July 30, and was prepared to make the charge. They received instructions at a given signal to discharge their guns onto the enemy's line, jump the parapet and ditch, and make a charge to cover the 'Crater'. But just before the signal was substituted in their place. This circumstance, young Holland has ever maintained, lost a key to the Union forces that otherwise would have been gained. It was at this battle that Holland had planned and decided to cover himself all over with glory. He was sorely disappointed but never relinquished the desire and intention to avail himself of the first opportunity.

"In the latter part of August, 1864, his

regiment moved to the right in front of Richmond at Deep Bottom. It was at this point that his regiment made its brilliant and famous charge on the 29th day of September, 1864. And it was there that Sergeant Major Holland led the assaulting company of his regiment in their famous charge. Brilliant as had been its past record, and courageous as the men had shown themselves to be on other fields, this one occasion seems to have been reserved as the crucial test of their fighting qualities. When they met the enemy, they fought hand to hand with a desperate valor that beggared description. The shot and shell of the enemy mowed down the front ranks of the colored troops like blades of grass beneath the sickle's deadly touch. But, with a courage that knew no bounds, the men stood like granite figures. They routed the enemy and captured the breastworks. The courage displayed by young Holland's regiment on this occasion called for the highest praise from General Grant who personally rode over the battlefield in company with Generals Butler and Draper. . . . .

"Holland was wounded in this battle but did not leave the field. Later in the day the regiment made a charge at Fort Harrison to relieve a brigade of white troops that was unable to get back to the Union lines."

"Immediately after the charge at New Market Heights, Holland was examined on the field by order of General Butler and passed for captain, but was, on account of color, refused his commission by the War Department. Twice he was presented with medals which were awarded him for bravery and distinguished services on the field of battle. One of these medals was voted him by Congress and forwarded to him through President Lincoln, and the other was awarded by General B.F. Butler."

"He served with his regiment at Dutch Gap until October 4th, when the regiment went over to Fair Oaks, or Seven Pines, where the Union forces achieved a victory of which they were afterwards deprived by a successful ruse of the enemy."

"In December, 1864, the regiment went with the great naval fleet under General Butler to

Fortress Fisher at the attempt to break up the blockade-running regiment landed at Fortress Fisher, they were compelled to withdraw on account of the insufficiency of support. They returned in January, 1865, under command of General Terry when this fort was captured."

"He was with his regiment on its marches through Wilmington, Bentonville, Goldsboro, and Raleigh. He was present when General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to General W.T. Sherman, and it was here that his regiment received the sad tidings of the death of President Lincoln, when men of iron nerves shed tears like broken-hearted children."

Houston Chronicle Magazine 11/9/86

ALMANAC

OUR TEXAS HEROES

"The first black Texan to win Medal of Honor"

He wanted to fight for the rights of his race, but the Union Army said, "No, the 17-year-old Texas farm boy from Carthage was too young." Little did they know that one day Milton M. Holland would win the Medal of Honor.

Undaunted by their rebuffs, Holland became a civilian employee of the Quartermaster Corps until June 1863, when he was mustered into the Union forces at Delaware, Ohio. He was assigned to the Fifth United States Colored Troops, commanded by Benjamin F. Butler.

For a while Holland saw action in the swamps of North Carolina, freeing slaves under the newly enacted Emancipation Proclamation. Then, as first sergeant of Company C(with the James River fleet), Holland and his company were part of the advance on Richmond and struck the first blow at Petersburg, capturing the Confederate flag, the signal station, and its officers. His Medal of Honor was awarded for his brilliant and daring actions in September 1865 at Chaffin's Farm. His officers had been killed, and he himself wounded, according to The Afro-American Texans (one of the

Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio, series).

After the war, Holland served as a United States Post Office Department executive in Washington, D.C. He died in 1910.

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS--1863-1963

"Prepared For The Subcommittee
On Veterans' Affairs"

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC
WELFARE UNITED STATES SENATE

HOLLAND, MILTON M.

Rank and organization: Sergeant Major, 5th United States Colored Troops. Place and date: At Chaffins Farm, Va., 29 September 1864. Entered service at: Athens, Ohio. Birth: Austin, Tex. Date of issue: 6 April 1865. Citation: Took command of Company C, after all the officers had been killed or wounded, and gallantly led it.

This is an excerpt from a report published during the Civil War. Milton Holland was singled out for the gallantry in action which resulted in his receiving the Medal of Honor.

Milton M. Holland

Head Quarters
Department of Virginia and
North Carolina
Soldiers of the Army of the James

The time has come when it is due to you that some work should be said of your deeds.

In accordance with the plan committed to you by the Lieutenant General Commanding the Armies, for the first time in the war, fully taking advantage of our facilities of steam marine transportation, you performed a march without parallel in the History of War.

At sunset of the 4th of May you were threatening the enemy's Capital from West Point and the White House, within thirty miles on its eastern side. Within twenty-four, at sunset on the 5th of May, by a march of a hundred and thirty miles, you transported thirty-five thousand men--their luggage, supplies, horses, wagons, and artillery--within fifteen miles of the south side of Richmond with such celerity and secrecy that the enemy was wholly unprepared for opposition to seize the strongest natural position on the Continent. A victory all the more valuable because bloodless.

Seizing the enemy's communications between the Capital and the south you held them all [illegible] day of May.

Other recipients of the Congressional Medal

Meanwhile your Cavalry, under Gen. Augustus V. Kautz cut the Weldon road below Petersburg twice over and destroyed a portion of the Danville railroad; while the colored cavalry, under Col. Robert M. West joined you by a march from Williamsburg across the Chickahominy to Harrison's Landing.

From the 12th to the 16th of May you "moved on the enemy's works" around Fort Darling, holding him in check while your cavalry cut the Danville road, capturing his first line of works, repulsing with great slaughter his attack which was intended for your destruction.

Retiring at leisure to your position, you fortified it--repulsing three several attacks of the enemy, until you have made it strong enough to hold itself.

Fortifying City Point, Fort Powhatten, Wilson's Wharf (Fort Pocahontas,) you secured your communications, and have practically moved Fortress Monroe as a base within fifteen miles of the Rebel Capital--there to remain till that travels.

Re-embarking after you had secured your position, with nearly your whole effective strength under Major General William F. Smith, you again appeared at the White House within 48 hours after you received the order to march participating at the memorable battle of Coal Harbor with the Army of the Potomac, where the number and character of your gallant dead attest your bravery and conduct.

Again returning in advance of that Army on the 15th of June, under Gen. Smith the 18th Corps captured the right of the line of defenses around Petersburg, and nine pieces of artillery, which lines you have since had for three months.

On the 16th of June a portion of the 10th Corps, under Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Terry again threw itself upon the enemy's communications between Richmond and Petersburg, and destroyed miles of the road, and holding it cut for days.

The 10th Corps, on the 14th day of August, passing the James at Deep Bottom under Major General David B. Birney, by a series of brilliant charges carried the enemy's works near New

Market, and two days later, another line of works at Fussell's Mills, defended by the best troops of Lee's Army, bringing back four guns and three battle flags as trophies of their valor.

Again crossing the James on the 29th of September, with both Corps, with celerity, precision, secrecy, and promptness of movement seldom equalled, with both Corps in perfect co-operation, you assaulted and carried at the same moment--the 10th Corps and the 3rd Division of the 18th Corps under Gen. Birney--the enemy's strong works with double lines of abatis at Spring Hill near New Market, while the remaining Divisions of the 18th Corps under Major General Edward O.C. Ord, carried by assault Battery Harrison, capturing twenty-two pieces of heavy ordinance--the strongest of the enemy's works around Richmond.

The Army thus possessed itself of the outer line of the enemy's works and advanced to the very gates of Richmond. So vital was your success at Battery Harrison that on the 1st of October, under the eye of Gen. Lee himself, massing his best troops, the enemy made most determined assaults upon your lines to retake it and were driven back with the loss of seven battle-flags and the almost annihilation of a Brigade (Clingman's). After a week's preparation massing all his veteran troops on your right flank, on the 7th day of October the enemy drove in the cavalry with the loss of some pieces of Horse Artillery, but meeting the steady troops of the 10th Corps were repulsed with slaughter, losing three commanders of brigades killed and wounded and many field and line officers and men killed, wounded and prisoners.

Such is the glorious record of the Army of the James--never beaten in a battle--never repulsed in an assault by a larger portion of its forces than a Brigade.

All these triumphs have not been achieved without many loved and honored dead.

Why should we mourn their departure? Their names have passed into history emblazoned on the proud roll of their country's patriot heroes.

Yet we drop a fresh tear for the gallant

General H.B. Burnham--a devoted soldier leading his Brigade to the crest of Battery Harrison, where he fell amid the cheers of the victorious charge. In his memory Battery Harrison will be officially designated Fort Burnham.

Of the colored soldiers of the 3rd Divisions of the 18th and 10th Corps and the officers who led them, the General Commanding desires to make special mention.

In the charge on the enemy's works by the colored Division of the 18th Corps at Spring Hill, New Market--better men were never better led--better officers never led better men. With hardly an exception, officers of colored troops have justified the care with which they have been selected. A few more such gallant charges and to command colored troops will be the post of honor in the American Armies. The colored soldiers by coolness, steadiness and determined courage and dash have silenced every cavil of the doubters of their soldierly capacity, and drawn tokens of admiration from their enemies--have brought their late masters even to the consideration of the question whether they will not employ as soldiers the hithered despised race. Be it so--this war is ended when a musket is in the hands of every able bodied negro who wished to use one.

In the present movement where all have deserved so will it is almost invidious to name, yet the justice requires special gallant acts noticed.

Major Generals Ord and Birney receive the thanks of the Commanding General for the prompt celerity of the movement of their Corps, both in time and manner, thereby securing thorough cooperation, although moving over different lines. Their active promptness cannot be too much commended as an example in other operations. To be able to move troops in exact time is a quality as scarce as it is valuable.

General Ord received a severe wound while directing the occupation of a captured redoubt.

Brigadier General Stannard is particularly distinguished for his gallantry in leading his Division in the assault until he lost his arm. The Commanding General took pleasure in

recommending General Stannard to promotion for meritorious services.

Milton M. Holland, Sergeant Major, 5th U.S. colored troops, commanding Co. C; James Branson, 1st Sergeant, commanding Co. D; Robert Pin, 1st Sergeant, commanding Co. I, wounded; Powhatan Beatty, 1st Sergeant, commanding Co. G, 5th U.S. colored troops--all these gallant colored soldiers were left in command, all their company officers being killed or wounded, and led them gallantly and meritoriously through the day. For these services they have most honorable mention, and the Commanding General will cause a special medal to be struck in honor of these gallant colored soldiers.

Robert Webb of the Washington Post provided us with a brief biography of Milton Holland. This data was prepared by Edwin C. Bearss, chief historian of the National Park Service. The information contains on error--it shows Milton Holland as being born in Austin and not Carthage, Texas. The biography reads:

Holland, Milton

He enlisted at Delaware, Ohio as a private in Company C, 5th U.S. Colored Infantry, for three years service.

Holland was then 18 years old, 5' 8'' in height, and yellowish in complexion. He had been born in Austin, Tex., and had worked as a shoemaker. He was promoted 1st Sergeant of Company C on Sept. 23, 1863; reduced to the ranks on April 4, 1864; promoted 1st Sergeant on July 1, 1864; and promoted regimental Sergeant-Major on the last day of August 1864.

Sergeant-Major Holland was mustered out Sept. 20, 1865, at Carolina City, M.C., Sept. 20, 1865.

On Sept. 29, 1864, at New Market Heights, Sergeant-Major Holland "took command of Company C, after all the officers had been killed or wounded and gallantly led it." For this, he was awarded the Medal of Honor on April 6, 1865.

The following was sent to us by the Washington Post giving us non-exclusive rights to reprint the well recognized article concerning Milton M. Holland, The Heights of Glory, starting on page 46.

"Milton Holland" by Bruce Marshall .

"His personal citation was for taking command of Company C, and gallantly leading it after all the officers had been killed wounded." -- Newspaper sketch of Milton M. Holland

The following information was sent to us by the Ohio Historical Society relating to Milton Holland.

Names.	Rank.	Age.	Date of Entering the Service.	Period of Service.	Remarks.
Wright, William R.	Private	32	Aug. 17, 1861	1 yr.	Died at Ft. Monroe, Va., of wound- received Sept. 29, 1864, in battle of Chapin's Farm, Virginia.
Zimmerman, Henry	do	22	June 27, 1863	3 yrs.	Discharged May 18, 1865, at Gold-boro, N. C., on Surgeon's certificate of disability.

COMPANY C.

Mustered in July 23, 1863, at Camp Delaware, Ohio, by A. F. Bond, Captain 24 Infantry, U. S. A., Mustering Officer. Mustered out September 20, 1865, at Carolina City, N. C., by David L. Way, 1st Lieutenant 5th U. S. Colored Troops, and A. C. M. 2d Division, late 10th A. C., Mustering Officer.

Gustavus Fahrion	Captain	24	Aug. 4, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed Aug. 7, 1863; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, near Newmarket Heights, Va.; resigned May 8, 1865.
Charles W. Griffith	1st Lieut.	25	Sept. 9, 1863	3 yrs.	Transferred from Co. I July 28, 1864; resigned Oct. 7, 1864.
Peter A. Stoniats	do	27	Sept. 21, 1863	3 yrs.	Transferred from Co. I Feb. 22, 1864; resigned Sept. 3, 1864.
Frank J. Call	do	21	Oct. 9, 1863	3 yrs.	Promoted from 2d Lieutenant Co. K Jan. 11, 1865; transferred to Co. H ——.
John B. Viers	do	24	Nov. 10, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed 2d Lieutenant Nov. 10, 1863; transferred to Co. F Sept. 3, 1864; transferred from Co. F April —, 1865; promoted to 1st Lieutenant May 1, 1865; transferred to Co. K May 19, 1865.
Joseph J. Scroggs	do	27	Aug. 5, 1863	3 yrs.	Transferred from Co. H Sept. 21, 1864; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Milton M. Holland	1st Sergt.	18	Jan. 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed June 24, 1863; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865; medal of honor awarded by Secretary of War.
Jordon W. Busentine	Sergeant	24	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed Corporal ——; Sergeant May 16, 1865; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William H. Fry	do	24	Oct. 16, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed ——; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, in battle of New Market Heights, Va.; discharged May 28, 1865, at Gold-boro, N. C., by order of War Department.
John W. Jackson	do	21	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed June 26, 1863; promoted to Sergeant Major Dec. 1, 1863.
Isaac L. Wells	do	23	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Mustered as Private; appointed Sergeant Dec. 1, 1863; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, in battle at New Market Heights, Va.; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Joseph A. Houston	do	20	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed Corporal ——; Sergeant Nov. 1, 1864; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Ferdinand Nelson	do	25	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed June 27, 1863; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, in battle at New Market Heights, Va.; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William H. Shanks	do	26	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed June 24, 1863; wounded March 27, 1865, in battle of Goldsboro, N. C.; discharged May 16, 1865, at Fort Monroe, Va. on Surgeon's certificate of disability.
Woodson Daniel	Corporal	24	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Israel Burles	do	22	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; wounded July 30, 1864, in battle in front of Petersburg, Va.; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William Boman	do	18	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William Bentley	do	20	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, in battle of New Market Heights, Va.; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William H. Thomas	do	20	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
John Newby	do	26	Sept. 10, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 24, 1863; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William J. Harper	do	21	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed May 16, 1865; wounded Sept. 29, 1864, in battle at New Market Heights, Va.; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
William H. Lett	do	18	Sept. 10, 1863	3 yrs.	Appointed July 1, 1865; mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Anderson, Daniel	Private	19	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.
Anderson, William C.	do	18	June 22, 1863	3 yrs.	Mustered out with company Sept. 20, 1865.

The Congressional Medal of Honor

Extract From Regulations Relative To The Medal of Honor

By direction of the President, the following regulations ar promulgated respecting the award of Medals of Honor:

Medals of Honor authorized by the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1863, are awarded to officers and enlisted men, in the name of the Congress, for particular deeds of most distinguished gallantry in action.

In order that the Congressional Medal of Honor may be deserved, service must have been performed in action of such a conspicuous character as to clearly distinguish the man for gallantry and intrepidity above his comrades--service that involved extreme jeopardy of life or the performace of extraordinary hazardous duty. Recommendations for the decoration will be judged by this standard of extraordinary merit, and incontestible proof of performance of the service will be exacted.

Soldiers of the Union have ever displayed bravery in battle, else victories could not have been gained; but as courage and self-sacrifice are the characteristics of every true soldier, such as the Congressional Medal is not to be expected as the reward of conduct that does not clearly distinguish the soldier above other men, whose bravery and gallantry have been proved in battle. ***

Recommendations for medals on account of service rendered subsequent to January 1, 1890, will be made by the commanding officer at the time of the action or by an officer or soldier having personal cognizance of the act for which the badge of honor is claimed, and the recommendation will embrace a detailed recital of all the facts and circumstances. Certificates of officers or the affidavits of enlisted men who were eyewitnesses of the act will also be submitted if practicable.

In cases that may arise for service performed hereafter, recommendations for award of medals must be forwarded within one year after the performance of the act for which the award is claimed. Commanding officers will thoroughly investigate all cases of recommendations for Congressional Medals arising in their commands, and indorse their opinion upon the papers, which will be forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Army through regular channels.

During the progress of the War of the Rebellion, in July, 1862, and March, 1863, Congress provided by joint resolution for Medals of Honor for most distinguished gallantry in action. Under the regulations of the War Department pursuant to these joint resolutions it is provided that every soldier and sailor in the service of the United States, who, outside of the strict line of his duty and beyond the orders of his superiors, performed an act of conspicuous bravery of advantage to the service, should be rewarded by receiving a "Medal of Honor," specially struck for that purpose, on satisfactory proof being presented of the circumstances of the act. From the beginning of the War of the Rebellion to the opening of the war with Spain, only about 1,400 of these medals were granted, including all those given for services in the Indian Wars which intervened. For services in the Spanish War, only 26 medals were awarded. When it is considered that nearly two millions of men served in these wars, and that their course was marked with innumerable gallant actions, the signal merit of these actions which earned the medals and the care with which the proof was scurtinized, may be better appreciated. Mere recklessness of danger, when duty is to be performed or orders obeyed, is a common attribute of all American soldiers, and those who received the Medal of Honor were doubtless, in many cases, more fortunate in opportunity rather than braver of heart than their comrades; yet the fact that less than 1,400 out of two millions wear this badge of heroism

marks the wearers as soldiers of extraordinary merit and heroism.

The offical record of these stories of heroic deeds in the service of the Republic is of the most meager character, a mere line, with the names of the individual, his company and regiment, and a brief phrase designating the character of his achievement, without any of the details which would give it life and dramatic interest. It scarcely rises above the form of a tabular statement. As time passed, the heroes of these deeds were rapidly disappearing from the stage of life, and soon all recollection of the essential features of their achievements, would be buried in the graves of those who performed and witnessed them. The design of this work was to gather these details together, verified by the medal bearers, their superior officers, or other witnesses, and present them to the American public in a form worthy of the subject.

The work has been by no means an easy one. It involved several years of arduous pursuit by the compilers, voluminous correspondence and exhaustive search; but it has been accomplished with a degree of completeness which was hardly to be expected. The compilers have had the advantage of the zealous assistance of every officer of the army to whom they applied, access to the offical reports of the War Department, and written reports of the incidents from the medal holders themselves. So far therefore, as historical accuracy is concerned, there is little apology to be made for the work. As to its literary merit, it may be said that much of it is the simple and modest language of the heroes themselves, who have minimized their own merits, and taken from their narratives much of the dramatic interest which is disinterested witness would have found in the deeds they performed. Many of the incidents, on the other hand, have been related by officers who were witnesses of the deeds of their subordinates, and who had the literary skill to mark and describe them in the manner they deserved, but without exaggeration or embellishment.

The editing of the work was committed to

competent hands, whose chief purpose was to eliminate crudities, and to avoid extravagant expressions to which such a work was easily liable. Whatsoever may be its demerits, its publishers may at least fairly claim that it is a truthful and modest narration of the most heroic personal achievements of our soldiers during the past half century, verified by competent officers, and sustained by proofs which have been accepted by the Government of the United States as evidence of the facts which deserved the distinguishing acknowledgement of the Medal of Honor.

COMPILERS' PREFACE

The pages of our country's history abound with instances of the most lofty courage, which thrill the pulse and kindle the spirit of every true patriot. Congress itself has singled out many of these instances and given them special recognition. It has provided for a medal, known as the "Medal of Honor." It is the nation's grateful acknowledgment of a great and heroic deed, a reward for such gallant services in action as make him who renders them conspicuous among his comrades.

The heart beats faster and the blood courses through the veins more rapidly, as one reads these simple stories published in the heroes' own modest words. These narrations speak for themselves. Editorial embellishment could only detract from their value.

The footnotes which accompany the several descriptions are intended to give a brief review of the historic events to which they refer. In this manner the reader will obtain an abridged history of our several wars, including the campaign in the Philippine Islands, illuminated by the thrilling acts of the nation's heroes.

To the contributors of the narrations, and all who have assisted in this task, and especially to General Lewellyn G. Estes and Captain James R. Durham, Washington, D.C., and

His Excellency, Hazen S. Pingree, Governor of the State of Michigan, the compilers feel themselves deeply indebted.

The compilers submit this work for the approval of the American people, hoping that their effort to preserve these heroic episodes in a permanent and worthy form, before all recollection of them has passed away, will not have been in vain, and that the result will be monument to remind generation after generation of Americans of the heroism of their fathers.

MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

The following four pages are devoted to the names and ranks of men who won their Medal of Honor during the great War of the Rebellion and whose names have not already been mentioned. The grounds of award differ in the individual cases, but they all properly come under the general head of "For distinguished gallantry in action outside the line of duty."

ADAMS, JAMES F.
Priv., Co. D., 1st W. Va. Cav.
ALBER, FREDERICK
Priv., Co. A, 17th Mich. Inf.
AMMERMAN, ROBERT W.
Corp., Co. K, 39th Ill. Inf.
ALLEN, ABNER P.
Priv., Co. B, 148th Pa. Inf.
AMES, ADELBERT
1st Lieut., 5th U. S. Art
ANDERSON, CHARLES W.
Priv., Co. K., 1st N. Y. Cav.
ANDERSON, FREDERICK C.
Priv., Co. A, 18th Mass. Inf.
ANDERSON, THOMAS
Corp., Co. I, 1st W. Va. Cav.
APPLE, ANDREW O.
Corp., Co. I, 12th W. Va. Inf.
APPLETON, WILLIAM H.
1st Lieut., Co. H, 4th U. S. C. T.
ARCHER, JAMES W.
1st Lieut., 59th Ind. Inf.
ARCHER, LESTER
Sergt., Co. F, 96th N. Y. Inf.
ARNOLD, ABRAHAM K.
Capt., 4th U. S. Cav.
AVERY, WILLIAM B.
Capt., 1st N. Y. Marine Art.
BABCOCK, WILLIAM J.
Sergt., Co. E, 2d R. I. Inf.
BACON, ELIJAH W.
Priv., Co. F, 14th Conn. Inf.
BAIRD, ABSALOM
Brig. Gen., U. S. Vols.
BANKS, GEORGE L.
Sergt., Co. C, 11th Ind. Inf.
BARKER, NATHANIEL C.
Sergt., Co. E, 11th N. H. Inf.

BARNES, WILLIAM H.
Priv., Co. C, 35th U. S. C. T.
BARNUM, HENRY A.
Col., 140th N. Y. Inf.
BARRELL, CHARLES L.
1st Lieut., Co. C, 102d U. S. C. T.
BARRY, AUGUSTUS
Sergt. Maj., 14th U. S. Inf.
BATCHELDER, RICHARD N.
Lieut.-Col. and Chief Q. M. 3d Corps.
BATES, NORMAN F.
Sergt., Co. E, 4th Iowa Cav.
BAYBUTT, PHILIP
Priv., Co. A, 2d Mass. Cav.
BEATTIE, ALEXANDER M.
Capt., Co. F, 3d Vt. Inf.
BEATY, POWHATAN
1st Sergt., Co. G, 5th U. S. C.
BEAUFORT, JEAN J.
Corp., Co. B, 8th U. S. Cav.
BEHR, EDWARD J.
Priv., Co. D, 4th Iowa Cav.
BEIDROWS, RICHARD
Priv., 9th N. Y. Battery.
BEISLEY, TERRENCE
Sergt., Co. D, 7th N. Y. H. A.
BELCHER, THOMAS
Priv., Co. I, 8th Mo. Inf.
BENJAMIN, JOHN F.
Corp., Co. M, 2d N. Y. Cav.
BENJAMIN, SAMUEL N.
1st Lieut., 3d U. S. Art.
BENNETT, GEORGE G.
1st Lieut., Co. F, 5th Vt. Inf.
BENNETT, GIBEON
Priv., Co. D, 103d Pa. Inf.

BENYAURD, WILLIAM H. H.
Capt., Corps of Engs., U. S. A.
BEYER, HILLARY
1st Lieut., Co. H, 49th Pa. Inf.
BIEGER, CHARLES
Priv., Co. B, 4th Mo. Cav.
BINGHAM, HENRY H.
Capt., Co. G, 140th Pa.
BIRDSALL, HORATIO
Sergt., Co. D, 3d Iowa Cav.
BISHOP, FRANCIS A.
Priv., Co. C, 67th Pa. Inf.
BLACK, WILLIAM P.
Capt., Co. K, 7th Ill. Inf.
BLICKENSDERFER, MILTON
Corp., Co. E, 126th Ohio Inf.
BLODGETT, WELLS H.
1st Lieut., Co. D, 8th Ill. Inf.
BLUCHER, CHARLES
Corp., Co. H, 188th Pa. Inf.
BONNAFFON, SYLVESTER, J
1st Lieut., Co. G, 99th Pa. Inf.
BOODY, ROBERT M.
Sergt., Co. B, 40th N. Y. Inf.
BOURKE, JOHN G.
Priv., Co. K, 15th Pa. Cav.
BOWEN, CHESTER B.
Corp., Co. I, 1st N. Y. Drag.
BOWEY, RICHARD
Sergt., Co. C, 1st W. Va. Cav.
BOX, THOMAS J.
Capt., Co. D, 7th Ind. Inf.
BRADLEY, THOMAS W.
Capt., Co. H and B, 12th N. Y. Inf.

GARDNER, CHARLES N.
Priv., Co. E, 32d Mass. Inf.
GARDNER, ROBERT I.
Sergt., Co. K, 54th Mass. Inf.
GARRETT, WILLIAM
Sergt., Co. G, 41st Ohio Inf.
GASSON, RICHARD
Sergt., Co. K, 67th N. Y. Inf.
GAUNT, JOHN C.
Priv., Co. G, 104th Ohio Inf.
GAYLORD, LEVI B.
Sergt., Co. A, 39th Mass. Inf.
GERE, THOMAS P.
1st Lieut., 6th Minn. Inf.
GIBBS, WESLEY
Sergt., Co. B, 2d Conn. H. A.
GIFFORD, BENJAMIN
Priv., Co. H, 121st N. Y. Inf.
GILLESPIE, GEORGE L.
1st Lieut., Corps of Engs., U. S. A.
GILMORE, JOHN C.
Maj., 16th N. Y. Inf.
GINLEY, PATRICK
Priv., Co. G, 1st N. Y. L. A.
GODLEY, LEONIDAS M.
1st Sergt., Co. E, 32d Iowa Inf.
GOODMAN, WILLIAM E.
1st Lieut., Co. D, 147th Pa. Inf.
GOULD, CHAS G.
Cap., Co. H, 6th Vt. Inf.
GOURAND, GEORGE E.
Capt. and A. D. C., U. S. Vols.
GRACE, PETER
Sergt., Co. G, 52d Pa. Inf.
GRAHAM, THOMAS N.
2d Lieut., Co. G, 58th Ind. Inf.
GRANT, GABRIEL
Surg., U. S. Vols.
GRAY, JOHN
Priv., Co. B, 6th Ohio Inf.
GREENE, OLIVER D.
Major and A. A. G., U. S. Army
GREENWALT, ABRAHAM
Priv., Co. G, 104th Ohio Inf.
GRIBBEN, JAMES H.
Lieut., Co. C, 2d N. Y. Cav.
GRIMSHAW, SAMUEL
Priv., Co. B, 52d Ohio Inf.
GRURE, GEORGE
Priv., Co. E, 134th N. Y. Inf.
GUERIN, FITZ W.
Priv., Battery A, 1st Mo. L. A.
HADLEY, OSGOOD T.
Corp., Co. E, 6th N. H. Vol. Inf.
HAGERTY, ASEL
Priv., Co. A, 61st N. Y. Inf.
HAIGHT, SIDNEY
Corp., Co. E, 1st Mich. S. S.
HALL, FRANCIS B.
Chaplain, 16th N. Y. Inf.
HALL, H. BETMOUR
Capt., Co. F, 121st N. Y. Inf.
HALL, NEWTON H.
Corp., Co. I, 104th Ohio Inf.
HALLOCK, NATHAN M.
Priv., Co. K, 12th N. Y. Inf.
HAMMEL, HENRY A.
Sergt., Battery A, 1st Mo. L. A.
HANEY, MILTON L.
Chaplain, 55th Ill. Inf.
HANFORD, EDWARD R.
Priv., Co. H, 2d U. S. Cav.
HANNA, JOHN
1st Sergt., Co. B, 14th V. R. C.
HANSCOM, MOSES C.
Corp., Co. F, 19th Me. Inf.
HARDENBERGH, HENRY M.
Priv., Co. G, 39th Ill. Inf.
HARMON, AMZI D.
Corp., Co. K, 210th Pa. Inf.
HARRINGTON, EPHRAIM W.
Sergt., Co. G, 2d Vt. Inf.
HARRIS, GEORGE W.
Priv., Co. B, 148th Pa. Inf.
HARRIS, JAMES H.
Sergt., Co. B, 34th U. S. C. T.
HARRIS, MOSES
1st Lieut., 1st U. S. Cav.
HART, WILLIAM F.
Priv., Co. B, 8th N. Y. Cav.
HARTRANFT, JOHN F.
Col., 4th Pa. Mil.
HASKELL, MARCUS M.
Sergt., Co. C, 4th Mass. Inf.
HATCH, JOHN P.
Brig. Gen., U. S. Vols.

HAWKEN, JAMES M.
Storekeeper, Q. M. Dept., U. S. A.
HAWKINS, THOMAS
Sergt.-Maj., 6th U. S. C. T.
HAYNES, ASBURY F.
Corp., Co. F, 7th Me. Inf.
HAYS, JOHN H.
Priv., Co. F, 4th Iowa Cav.
HEDGES, JOSEPH
1st Lieut., 4th U. S. Cav.
HENRY, GUY V.
Col., 6th Mass. Inf.
HERRON, FRANCIS J.
Lieut.-Col., 9th Iowa Inf.
HICKEY, DENNIS W.
Sergt., Co. E, 2d N. Y. Cav.
HICKOK, NATHAN E.
Corp., Co. A, 8th Conn. Inf.
HIGBY, CHARLES
Priv., Co. F, 1st Pa. Cav.
HIGHLAND, PATRICK
Corp., Co. D, 63d Ill. Inf.
HILL, HENRY
Sergt., Co. C, 66th Pa. Inf.
HILL, JAMES
Sergt., Co. C, 14th N. Y. H. A.
HINKS, WILLIAM B.
Sergt.-Maj., 10th Conn. Inf.
HOFFMAN, HENRY
Corp., Co. M, 2d Ohio Cav.
HOGAN, FRANKLIN
Corp., Co. A, 45th Pa. Inf.
HOLCOMB, DANIEL J.
Priv., Co. A, 41st Ohio Inf.
HOLEHOUSE, JAMES
Priv., Co. B, 7th Mass. Inf.
HOLLAND, MILTON M.
Sergt.-Maj., 4th U. S. C. T. Inf.
HOLMES, WILLIAM T.
Priv., Co. A, 2d Ind. Cav.
HOLTON, EDWARD A.
1st Sergt., Co. I, 6th Vt. Inf.
HOMAN, CONRAD
Color Sergt., Co. A, 20th Mass.
HOOKER, GEORGE W.
1st Lieut., Co. E, 6th Vt. Inf.
HOOPER, WILLIAM B.
Corp., Co. L, 1st N. J. Cav.
HOPEY, EDWARD
2d Lieut., Co. C, 13th V. R. C.
HOUGH, IRA
Priv., Co. F, 8th Ind. Inf.
HOULTON, WILLIAM
Commy. Sergt., 1st W. Va. Cav.
HOWARD, HIRAM R.
Priv., Co. H, 11th Ohio Inf.
HOWARD, JAMES
Sergt., Co. K, 164th N. Y. Inf.
HOWE, ORON P.
Mus., Co. C, 45th Ill. Inf.
HOWE, WILLIAM H.
Sergt., Co. K, 20th Mass. Inf.
HUBBELL, WILLIAM S.
Capt., Co. A, 21st Conn. Inf.
HUDSON, AARON R.
Priv., Co. C, 17th Ind. Mtd. Inf.
HUGHEY, JOHN
Corp., Co. I, 2d Ohio Cav.
HUGHS, OLIVER
Corp., Co. C, 12th Ky. Inf.
HYMER, SAMUEL
Capt., Co. D, 11th Ill. Inf.
IMMELL, LORENZO D.
Corp., Co. F, 2d U. S. Art.
IRWIN, PATRICK
1st Lieut., Co. H, 14th Mich. Inf.
JAMES, ISAAC
Priv., Co. H, 110th Ohio Inf.
JAMES, MILES
Corp., Co. B, 36th U. S. C. T.
JENNINGS, JAMES T.
Priv., Co. K, 56th Pa. Inf.
JOHNSON, FOLLETT
Corp., Co. H, 60th N. Y. Inf.
JOHNSON, RUEL M.
Maj., 19th Ind. Inf.
JOHNSON, SAMUEL
Priv., Co. G, 4th Pa. Res.
JOHNSTON, WILLIE
Mus., Co. D, 2d Vt. Inf.
JONES, WILLIAM
1st Sergt., Co. A, 2d N. Y. Inf.
JORDAN, ABSALOM
Corp., Co. A, 2d Ind. Cav.

JUDGE, FRANCIS W.
1st Sergt., Co. K, 7th N. Y. Inf.
KAISER, JOHN
Sergt., Co. K, 2d U. S. Art.
KALTENBACH, LUTHER
Corp., Co. F, 13th Iowa Inf.
KANE, JOHN
Corp., Co. K, 164th N. Y. Inf.
KAUSS, AUGUSTUS
Corp., Co. H, 15th N. Y. H. A.
KARR, JOHN
1st Sergt., Co. D, 14th V. R. C.
KEELS, JOSEPH
Sergt.-Maj., 12th N. Y. Inf.
KELLEY, GEORGE V.
Capt., Co. A, 104th Ohio Inf.
KELLY, THOMAS
Priv., Co. A, 6th N. Y. Cav.
KEMP, JOSEPH
1st Sergt., Co. D, 5th Mich. Inf.
KENNEDY, JOHN
Priv., Co. M, 2d U. S. Art.
KENYON, JOHN S.
Sergt., Co. D, 2d N. Y. Cav.
KENYON, SAMUEL F.
Priv., Co. B, 24th N. Y. Cav.
KEOUGH, JOHN
Corp., Co. E, 67th Pa. Inf.
KEPHART, JAMES
Priv., Co. C, 13th U. S. Inf.
KIMBALL, JOSEPH
Priv., Co. B, 2d W. Va. Cav.
KINDIG, JOHN M.
Corp., Co. A, 63d Pa. Inf.
KINSEY, JOHN
Corp., Co. B, 46th Pa. Inf.
KIRBY, DENNIS T.
Maj., 9th Mo. Inf.
KIRK, JONATHAN C.
Capt., Co. F, 39th Ind. Inf.
KLINE, HENRY
Priv., Co. E, 40th N. Y. Inf.
KNIGHT, CHARLES H.
Corp., Co. I, 9th N. H. Inf.
KOOGLE, JACOB
1st Lieut., Co. C, 7th Md. Inf.
KRAMER, THEODORE
Priv., Co. G, 123th Pa. Inf.
KUDER, JEREMIAH
Lieut., Co. A, 74th Ind. Inf.
LAING, WILLIAM
Sergt., Co. F, 125th N. Y. Inf.
LANDIS, JAMES P.
Chief Bugler, 1st Pa. Cav.
LANE, MORGAN T.
Priv., Signal Corps, U. S. A.
LANFAIR, AARON S.
1st Lieut., Co. B, 1st Conn. Cav.
LARIMER, SMITH
Corp., Co. G, 2d Ohio Cav.
LAWSON, GAINES
1st Sergt., Co. D, 4th Tenn. Inf.
LAWTON, HENRY W.
Capt., Co. A, 20th Ind. Inf.
LEONARD, EDWIN
Sergt., Co. I, 37th Mass. Inf.
LEONARD, WILLIAM E.
Priv., Co. F, 45th Pa. Inf.
LEPORT, WILLIAM F.
Sergt., Co. K, 37th N. J. Inf.
LESLIE, FRANK
Priv., Co. B, 4th N. Y. Cav.
LITTLEFIELD, GEORGE H.
Corp., Co. G, 1st Me. Inf.
LOCKE, LEWIS
Priv., Co. A, 1st N. J. Cav.
LOHNAS, FRANCIS W.
Priv., Co. H, 1st Nebr. Vet. Cav.
LOVE, GEORGE M.
Col., 118th N. Y. Inf.
LOVERING, GEORGE M.
1st Sergt., Co. I, 4th Mass. Inf.
LOWER, CYRUS B.
Priv., Co. K, 13th Pa. Res.
LOYD, GEORGE
Priv., Co. A, 123d Ohio Inf.
LUCAS, GEORGE W.
Pvte., Co. C, 1st Mo. Cav.
LUDWIG, CARL
Priv., 24th N. Y. Battery.
LUTHER, JAMES H.
Priv., Co. D, 7th Mass. Inf.
LYMAN, JOEL H.
Sergt., Troop B, 9th N. Y. Cav.

Military Collector & Historian
Journal of the Company of Military
Collectors & Historians

INDIVIDUAL DECORATIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR AND EARLIER

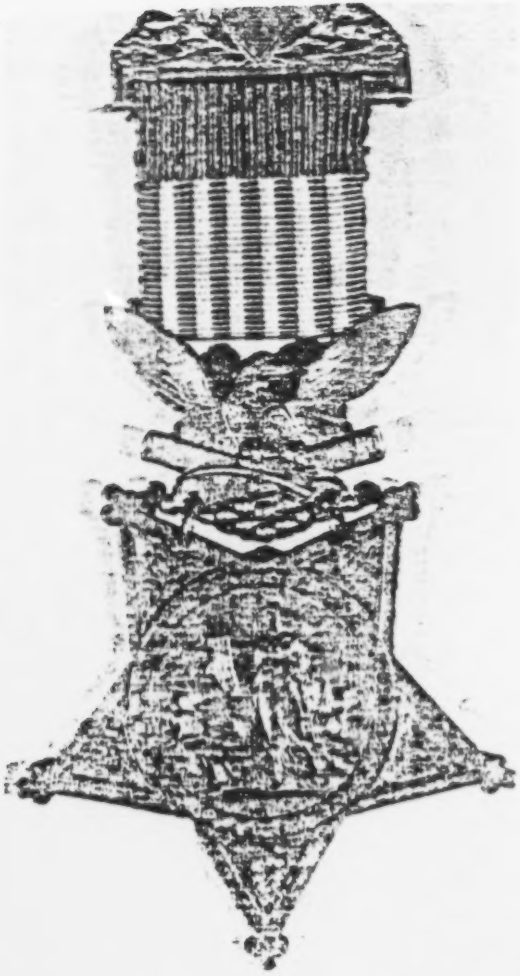
by John Wike

This article deals primarily with decorations awarded to American enlisted men, while the Civil War was in progress. It also includes record of the scanty honors handed out to soldiers prior to 1861. In contrast, no attempt is made to carry the story beyond the end of the conflict. After the war many States, patriotic societies, fraternal organizations, and veteran associations awarded medals of one sort or another. But these gave no boost to the soldiers while they were in the thick of the fight, so they are not included here.

From the Revolutionary War up until the outbreak of the Civil War, little had been done through decorations to elevate and crystalize the esprit de corps of the army as a whole. Scant recognition had been given to the value, for morale purposes, of awarding medals to enlisted men for valor or other soldierly qualities. Although various officers had been given handsome medals or other more of less precious symbols of our country's esteem, the enlisted man was awarded little or nothing at all.

During the Revolutionary War, General Washington had recognized this need and, late in the war, had established the Badge of

This photo is a picture of Butlers medal for colored troops. He presented the medal to Milton for his heroic deed at Chaffin's farm.



This photo is of the Congressional Medal of Honor. A national award presented to Milton for his actions at Chaffin's farm.

Military Merit (Purple Heart). Records reveal the names of but three recipients of this award. At approximately the same time he also authorized the Honorary Badge of Distinction to be given to enlisted men who had several three years with bravery, fidelity, and good conduct.

In 1780 the Continental Congress awarded three militiamen a medal for their part in capturing Major John Andre of the British Army while he was enroute to New York from West Point after having plotted with General Benedict Arnold for the betrayal of the American cause.

Nothing further was done along these lines until the Mexican War, when a Certificate of Merit, which also carried a $2.00 a month raise was authorized for deserving enlisted men. However, this was not a medal that a soldier could wear proudly on his uniform and show to the world at large, but a scrap of paper and, as such, no great moral builder. It was not until January 1905 that a badge was authorized to be issued to men who had been awarded a certificate of merit. Because only Congress could authorize the establishment of a medal, the award was classed as a badge. Thus, the President could authorize it. However, it did not help those who had won it in the Mexican War for it could only be given to men still in service. In 1918 the badge and the Certificate were discontinued and replaced by the Distinguished Service Medal.

During the year 1847 a committee composed of citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana came to Mexico and presented several gold medals to a number of commissioned officers and enlisted men. Major G. H. Crossman, Quartermaster Department, left two medals with the Adjurant General, on the 27th of October, along with the following memorandum:

The two gold medals herewith presented to Capt. O'Sullivan and Sergt. McCabe of the Army, by citizens of New Orleans were left in my hands at Camargo, Mexico, by one of the committee of presentation who brought to Mexico and

delivered several other medals of a similar description to out non-com officers, but could not find the above named persons: who were then either discharged or absent in the United States on recruiting service.

As I do not know where to find O'Sullivan or McCabe I leave the medals with the Adjt. Genl. with a request that he will have them delivered to these persons.

The medals were deposited in a strong box in the Quartermaster General's Office for safe keeping on the same day.

Four mouths later Major General James B. McPherson directed that "in order to encourage and reward the meritorious and faithful officers and men of this corps (17th Army Corps) a medal of honor, with appropriate device, has been prepared.... will be presented ... to all those who, by their gallantry in action and other soldier - like qualities, have most distinguished themselves or who many hereafter most distinguish themselves during the war."

The medal, made by Tiffany and Company of New York, although not specifically directed in general orders, appears to have been in two classes. Private George J. Reynolds, Company D, 15th Iowa Volunteers was awarded a gold medal of honor, 26 July 1864, for his gallant attempt to rescue the mortally wounded General McPherson. Later orders awarded a silver or gold medal to deserving soldiers.

At about the same time, Major General Quincy A. Gillmore, commanding the Department of the South, directed that Medals of Honor for gallant and meritorious conduct during the operations before Charleston, South Carolina, July-September 1863, would be awarded to a number of the enlisted men of the command, not exceeding three percent, of those units that had been in action or on duty in the batteries or trenches. On 4 November 1863 a newspaper reporter sent the following dispatch to the New York Herald:

General Gillmore had adopted the Napoleonic idea of awarding to such soldiers as

deserve it, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the field, a medal of honor. Ball, Black & Co., of your city, are now engaged in getting up this testimonial from a successful general to his men. The medal, which will be of bronze, is to bear upon one side a representation, in relief, of Sumter in ruins, and upon the other a facsimile of the General's autograph: while the buckle to which the medal is to be attached will have upon it, neatly engraved, the name of the soldier to whom it is presented....

General Gillmore had 400 of these medals struck off. A certificate embellished with facsimiles of both sides of the medal, was also given.

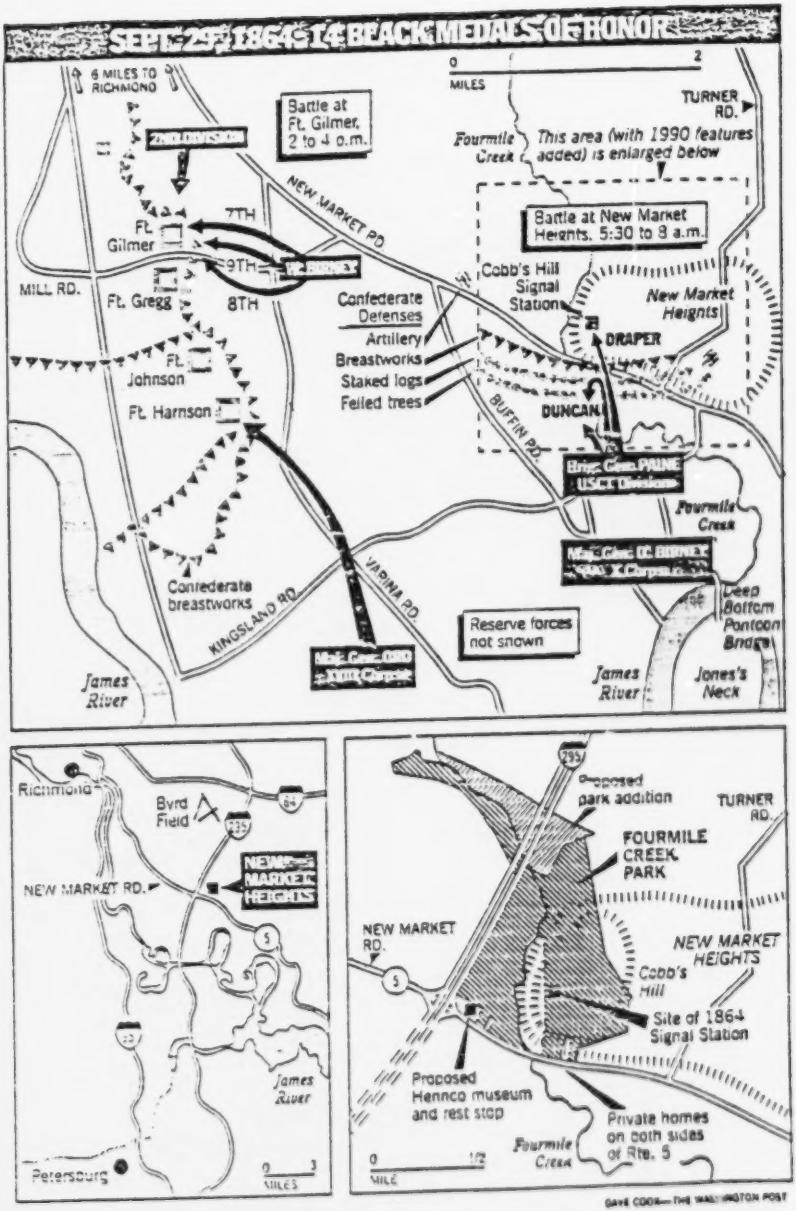
In October 1864, General Benjamin F. Butler contracted with Tiffany and Company and Ball, Black & Company of New York for a suitable medal to be presented to the Negro soldiers of the Army Corps for their valorous part in the storming of the New Market Heights and at Chaffins' Farm in September 1864. On 28 May 1865, he wrote to General Godfrey Weitzel, then commanding the 25th Corps, and forwarded forty-six medals for distribution. In his letter, he stated as follows:

Please seek out the deserving, and distribute them freely, as I would have done. They will be the only rewards the colored soldiers will get. They are not even allowed to march in review in the grand army triumph, and they ought not if they had been defeated as many times as the imbecility of its generals had led the Army of the Potomac to disaster. You will also confer a favor if you will let the recipients know that these medals came from me, as I promised to that simple and guileless people.

The General had 200 medals struck off and distributed. In 1892, General Butler, in his autobiography wrote as follows:

I had a medal struck of like size, weight, quality, fabrication, and intrinsic value with those which Queen Victoria gave with her own hand to her distinguished private soldiers of the Crimea.

The obverse of the medal shows a bastion fort charged upon by negro soldiers, and bears the inscription "Ferro iis libertas preveniet." The reverse bears the words, "Campaign before Richmond," encircling the words "Distinguished for Courage," while there was plainly engraved upon the rim, before its presentation, the name of the soldier, his company and his regiment. The medal was suspended by a ribbon of red, white, and blue, attached to the clothing by a strong pin, having in front an oak-leaf with the inscription in plain letters, "Army of the James." These I gave with my own hand, save where the recipient was in a distant hospital wounded, and by the commander of the colored corps after it was removed from my command and I record with pride that in that single action there were so many deserving that it called for a presentation of nearly two hundred. Since the war I have been fully rewarded by seeing the beaming eye of many a colorful comrade as he drew his medal from the innermost recesses of its concealment to show me.


SEPT. 29, 1864 14 BLACK MEDALS OF HONOR
6 MILES TO RICHMOND
Battle at Ft. Gilmer, 2 to 4 a.m.
NEW MARKET RD.
7TH
Ft. Gilmer
9TH
8TH
MILL RD.
Ft. Gregg
Ft. Johnson
Ft. Harnson
Confederate breastworks
KINGSLAND RD.
VARINA RD.
James River
0 MILES 2
TURNER RD.
Fourmile Creek
This area (with 1990 features added) is enlarged below
Battle at New Market Heights, 5:30 to 8 a.m.
Cobb's Hill Signal Station
New Market Heights
Confederate Defenses
Artillery
Breastworks
Staked logs
Felled trees
DRAPER
DUNCAN
BUFFIN RD.
Brigadier General PAINE
U.S.C.T. Division
Fourmile Creek
Deep Bottom Pontoon Bridge
Reserve forces not shown
James River
Jones's Neck
Richmond
Byrd Field
NEW MARKET RD.
NEW MARKET HEIGHTS
James River
Petersburg
0 3 MILES
Proposed park addition
TURNER RD.
FOURMILE CREEK PARK
NEW MARKET RD.
NEW MARKET HEIGHTS
Cobb's Hill
Site of 1864 Signal Station
Proposed Hennco museum and rest stop
Private homes on both sides of Rte. 5
Fourmile Creek
0 1/2 MILE
DAVE CODA—THE WASHINGTON POST

OUTLOOK: Commentary and Opinion
Sunday, February 18, 1990
Robert A. Webb

THE HEIGHTS OF GLORY

Early on a September morning in 1864, a Union general rode in grim triumph across a battlefield south of Richmond. He had to guide his mount carefully. On the now quiet field lay hundreds of his men, dead and wounded. Aside from a handful of white officers, all were black.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Franklin Butler, hoping to capture the Confederate capital, had selected them to challenge some of Robert E. Lee's finest troops dug in below a mile-long hill where two federal assaults were repulsed earlier that year. Butler's men had not failed him--or themselves.

At the battle of New Market Heights, Butler was to write in his memoirs, "the capacity of the negro race for soldiers had then and there been fully settled forever. . . I swore to myself an oath. . . that they and their race should be cared for and protected by me. . . so long as I lived."

The flamboyant general lost little time. No fewer than 14 of his black troops would receive the new Medal of Honor--the nation's highest military decoration--for gallantry that day. Another 200 would receive a special medal commissioned by Butler from Tiffany and Co. In an address to the Army of the James on Oct. 11, Butler saluted the men of New Market Heights: "A few more such gallant charges, and to command colored troops will be the post of honor in the American Armies."

Yet eight months later, the war now over, Sgt. Maj. Christian A. Fleetwood bitterly concluded that, Medal of Honor or not, blacks had no future in the military. Every white officer

in his regiment, supported by his brigade and division commanders, had proposed him for a commission, but the War Department had declined. "Upon all our record there is not a single blot," he wrote, "and yet no member of this regiment is considered deserving of a commission."

Today the battle and the heroes are all but forgotten. Earthworks remain South of New Market Road, and a small redoubt sits hidden on the heights--its moat, parapets and powder magazine overgrown but unmistakable. But no marker designates the site and no monument pays homage to the valor of Sept. 29, 1864.

That may soon change, even though homes and private land occupy much of the battlefield and more development is ensured by soon-to-be-completed I-295 between Richmond and Petersburg. The hilltop fort and the battle's staging area near the James River already lie within recently acquired Henrico County parkland. Officials and preservationists--with a timely boost from the movie "Glory"--are separately considering how to commemorate this unique heritage.

So in time, New Market Heights might become the fitting site of a national memorial--not just to a battle but to the 178,000 United States Colored Troops (USCT) and other blacks who fought in the Civil War. Their story has been largely overlooked for 125 years--a story of men who first had to fight for the right to fight before they could fight for freedom itself, of the unlikely white general who championed their cause in war and their future in a peaceful South, of one hero still fighting three decades later and of the 14 medals that symbolize the black effort in the Civil War.

The Colored Troops' moment at New Market Heights had been a long time coming. At the start of the war in 1861, Northern whites were almost universally opposed to arming blacks. Like many Southerners, they were both fearful and scornful: blacks were to blame for the war; they were servile and inferior; they could not fight, and whites would not fight beside them. Even Lincoln worried that arming blacks "would turn 50,000 bayonets from the loyal Border States

against us that are now for us."

Perhaps black abolitionist Frederick Douglass came closest to the real reason: "Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S.; let him get an eagle on the button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States."

Gradually, under pressure from abolitionists and the thousands of escaped slaves and Northern free blacks who were volunteering their services, the mood began to change. By early 1862, some generals were using blacks in labor battalions and as scouts. In August, Ben Butler, as military governor of New Orleans, organized 1,400 freedmen into the Louisiana Native Guards--the first official black regiment in the U.S. Army. By now Lincoln himself, faced with heavy casualties and expiring one-year enlistments, had concluded that black troops were badly needed. The formal Emancipation Proclamation made it official: as of Jan. 1, 1863, black units would be organized to fight for freedom. Recruitment began on a massive scale.

But the glory still belonged to whites. Black troops were paid less, denied commission as officers, harassed and beaten and even fired on by white soldiers and relegated at first to building fortifications and driving cattle. If captured, they were not considered legitimate prisoners of war; many were returned to or sold into slavery and some were executed. but hundreds of white officers volunteered to train and lead black troops, and soon thousands were ready to prove their mettle in combat.

Many of war's great set-piece battles had already been fought, but in the remaining 23 months of the conflict, black troops took part in at least 39 major engagements and 410 minor ones. By most accounts, they represented about 12 percent of the Union Army's manpower, 7 percent of its desertions and a third of its deaths--68,178, of which 2,751 were in combat and the rest from wounds and disease. In August 1863,

Grant wrote Lincoln: "By arming the negro, we have added a powerful ally." (In the war's final months, the Confederate government tried to enlist 200,000 slaves as soldiers, but few were recruited and none served in battle.)

In the black soldiers' first major offensive, on May 27, 1863, they lost 308 men--a third--assaulting a Confederate stronghold at Port Hudson, La. In April 1864, 300 blacks were killed at Fort Pillow, Tenn., many after surrendering to troops of Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a former slave dealer and future Ku Klux Klan leader. In their most famous moment (depicted in "Glory"), 246 men of the 54th Massachusetts died on July 18, Wagner in South Carolina. Their greatest one-day loss--1,327--occurred on July 30, 1864, in the calamitous Battle of the Crater at Petersburg. Union troops had tunneled 500 yards under the Confedecate lines and set off 8,000 pounds of black powder; in the ensuing attack thousands of white and black infantry poured into the resulting crater, instead of around it, and were cut to pieces. Two months later, New Market Heights would crown the list.

In the fall of 1864, the war was not going well for either side. The South was reeling as William Tecumseh Sherman laid waste to Georgia, Phil Sheridan prepared to torch the Shenandoah Valley breadbasket and Ulysses Grant besieged Lee in a maze of forts and trenches between Richmond and Petersburg.

The North had its own worries as the November presidential election approached. Grant's casualties had been enormous and public patience was fading. In July, Confederate Gen. Jubal Early had attacked Washington itself before fading back into the Valley and, if he were able to repulse Sheridan, could again threaten the capital. Confederate agents were trying to stir election-eve riots in Northern cities. And Lincoln's Democratic opponent--George McClellan, the Army of the Potomac's "little Napoleon" whom he had sacked in 1862 for failing to fight--was calling for armistice and unconditional peace talks, a virtual guarantee of Southern

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independence and the continuation of slavery.

In this grim moment, Grant conceived a counterstroke. A strong attack against the Richmond-Petersburg line might prevent Lee from reinforcing Early, thus relieving the threat against Washington and freeing Sheridan to scorch the Shenandoah. On Sept. 27, Grant ordered Ben Butler and his Army of the James to attack Richmond's outer defenses and, if successful, to capture the Confederate capital itself. It was the opportunity Butler had been waiting for.

In a war notable for controversial, colorful and ambitious generals, Ben Butler may have led the pack. In 1860, as a Massachusetts politician and lawyer, he supported Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis for the Democratic presidential nomination; within a year, he was a Union general determined to crush Davis and his Confederacy. Butler quickly established himself as a tough and effective administrator--pacifying secessionists in Baltimore, restoring severed rail lines to isolated Washington, then taking up residence as military governor at Fort Monroe near Norfolk. There he soon demonstrated his genius for controversy by refusing to return fugitive slaves to their masters on grounds they were "contraband"--seized enemy property. Abused handedly and without authorization, he [illegible] southern slaves [illegible] federal [illegible] a Union soldier would be "treated as a woman [illegible] the town plying her avocation." In late 1862, Lincoln recalled the remorseless "Beast of New Orleans."

By then Butler's reputation was soaring in

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the North, and as he toured and spoke, his friends and admires began talking of a political future--perhaps a Cabinet post first and then the presidency in 1868. It was never far from his mind or his pen ("So the dear little puss wants to be Mrs. Secretary of War, does she?" he wrote his wife. "Sly little puss.")

In late 1863, too influential to be removed by Lincoln, Butler returned to Fort Monroe as commander of the Army of the James. Thus in the fall of 1864, one of the Union's most political and least competent field generals found himself with the chance of a lifetime: to prove his growing conviction that blacks troops could play a decisive role in the war, a conviction that might help him capture the Confederate capital and even win the White House.

Butler's plan called for the white XVIII Corps under Maj. Gen. Edward Ord to cross the James River and attack the Confederate lines at Fort Harrison and for Maj. Gen. David Birney's X Corps to cross and attack New Market Heights three miles to the east. Then both corps would capture crucial Fort Gilmer a mile north and thrust another six miles into Richmond.

Butler pointedly suggested that the New Market Heights attack be led by the 3,100 men in Brig. Gen. Charles Paine's black 3rd Division. In his autobiography years later, he explained: "I was determined to put them in position to demonstrate the value of the negro as a soldier, coute qui coute, and that the experiment should be one of which no one should doubt, if it attained success."

The XVIII Corps carried Fort Harrison easily but bogged down as reinforcements arrived. At New Market Heights, the going was much harder. There the Confederates had dug a line of trenches flanked by artillery and faced by a double line of felled trees or abatis 100 yards apart--one of slashed branches, the other of logs studded with sharpened poles. Manning the lines were 1,800 hardened Texans and Arkansans of Lee's "Grenadier Guard."

The 13,000 federals advancing through the fog quickly lost their numerical advantage as the

corps' two white divisions and a black brigade were held back in reserve. Paine's black division moved forward, but only one of its three brigades was ordered to attack--1,100 inexperienced troops under inexperienced Col. Samuel Duncan. At 5:30 a.m., the 3rd Brigade's two regiments--the 4th and 6th USCT--moved out through the fog, crossed a creek and sent axemen ahead to hack through the entangling first abatis.

The alerted Confederates opened up with devastating effect. Duncan's men and their white officers pressed ahead, but the Confederates poured out of their trenches, killing scores in close combat and murdering others who surrendered. For 40 minutes, the federals hung on without support--then crumbled and withdrew. The brigade was destroyed but its gallant effort would win Medals of Honor for Sgt. Maj. Fleetwood and four of his comrades--Sgt. Alfred Hilton, Pvt. Charles Veal, Sgt. Maj. Thomas Hawkins and First Sgt. Alexander Kelly--all for seizing the colors from fallen bearers and pressing the attack.

Now Paine sent forward his 2nd Brigade under Col. Alonzo Draper. Its 5th, 36th and 38th USCT regiments moved out of a ravine, crossed the field where many of Duncan's men still lay, slogged through a marsh and charged into the abatis. By now the fog had lifted, and artillery shells and musket fire stopped the federals cold.

Cpl. Miles James of the 36th, his right arm mutilated and the bones shattered, loaded and fired his musket with one hand and urged his men forward. Pvt. James Gardiner of the 36th, seeing a Confederate officer leaping to the parapet to rally his men, rushed ahead of the brigade, shot the officer and ran him through with his bayonet. First Sgt. Powathan Beaty, Sgt. Maj. Milton Holland and First Sgts. James Bronson and Robert Pinn each took command of his company when officers fell. Those nine would also win Medals of Honor.

Gradually the Confederate fire slackened: The rebels were pulling out to protect Fort Gilmer. The black regiments seized the works,

scrambled to the summit and occupied a fortified signal station on a section called Cobb's Hill. New Market Heights had fallen.

Within an hour, Butler arrived on the scene. "Poor fellows," he wrote his wife the next dawn. "They seem to have so little to fight for in this contest with the weight of prejudice loaded upon them. To us, there is patriotism, fame, love of country, pride, ambition, all to spur us on . . But there is one boon they love to fight for freedom for themselves and their race forever."

Now the reserves of Birney's X Corps moved up New Market Road for the combined attack on Fort Gilmer. But the XVIII Corps remained stymied at Fort Harrison, and the X Corps would have to do it alone. Its white 2nd Division, exhausted and depleted after an all night march from Petersburg, attacked first and but melted away. Again, the job would fall to black troops--Brig. Gen. William Birney's brigade--and again they would be thrown in piecemeal.

The 9th USCT moved against the fort but quickly was driven back. The 8th pinned them down 250 yards short. And finally came the turn of the 7th USCT. But incredibly, the orders were ambiguous and just four companies--nine officers and 189 black Marylanders--charged the fort. Many fell halfway there, but about 140 reached its moat and kept up the assault, clawing at the ramparts and boosting one another to the top while rebel defenders dropped explosives on them and calmly put a bullet through any head that appeared above the parapet. All attacker but one were killed, wounded or captured.

If anything, the 7th USCT'S bravery at Fort Gilmer may have surpassed that at New Market Heights or anywhere that day. Butler missed the action; he was off looking for Grant to tell him of his success at New Market Heights. There would be no Medals of Honor for the heroes of Fort Gilmer.

In the morning, a Confederate counterattack at Fort Harrison failed, and with it ended the combined battle known today as Chaffins Farm. The two days had cost 1,732 black casualties and 1,559 white. Besides the 14 blacks, 23 whites

would win Medals of Honor.

New Market Heights, if nor a major victory, was the Colored Troops' finest hour. In his definitive "Richmond Redeemed," Richard Sommers wrote that "nothing can detract from the heroism of Duncan's vanguard that reached the trench or from the valor of Drapper's men who resumed the advance after suffering so severely."

For Ben Butler, New Market Heights marked his own personal height as well. Confidently anticipating bigger things to come, he sent the House Military Affairs Committee a lengthy proposal for reorganizing the War Department. "We have become essentially a warlike people," he wrote and needed a large, permanent European-style military establishment based on the "science of war." Just the job for an ambitious new secretary of war. But at Christmas, Butler botched a joint Army-Navy operation to blow up and capture Fort Fisher, N.C. Lincoln, safely re-elected, had no further use for Butler. On Jan. 8, Grant ordered him home for good.

Ben Butler would remain in the public eye for another 30 years--as a Radical Republican congressman, chief prosecutor in the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, father of the greenback as a legal currency, governor of Massachusetts and unsuccessful presidential candidate of the Greenback Party in 1884. Throughout, he maintained his paternalistic stance as a protector of black Americans. His Reconstruction views were harsh: the rebel states would remain territories "until all possibilities or race war" had ended and until "the negro had learned how to be a citizen and the white man learned how to be loyal." He sponsored legislation to punish Ku Klux Klan atrocities and to end discrimination in public accommodations.

He was especially proud of his Army of the James medal--the "Butler medal"--and pictured it in his autobiography, on the obverse, black soldiers charging a fort and the inscription "U.S. Colored Troops"; on the reverse, the words "Campaign Before Richmond" and "Distinguished for Courage." "Since the war," he wrote. "I have been fully rewarded by seeing the beaming eye of

many a colored comrade as he drew his medal...to show me."

Though Butler's men did not make it to Richmond that September, black troops were among the first to occupy the burning, evacuated capital six months later, and others joined in pursing Lee to Appomattox. Most were by then reorganized into the XXV Corps--the only black corps in American history--which would see border action in Texas against the Emperor Maximilian's encroaching Mexican and French troops. The XXV Corps disbanded in 1866, scattering its men to become Indian fighters, cowboys and railroad workers.

One who did not go west was the remarkable Christian Fleetwood; nor did he cease pressing for black opportunity in the military. Born of free parents in Baltimore, Fleetwood was well educated and worked briefly in Liberia before enlisting at age 23.

Returning from the war, Fleetwood settled in Washington, worked at the Freedman's Bank and War Department and became known as a choirmaster and speaker. In 1887, he was appointed major in command of the Sixth (later First Separate) Battalion of the D.C. National Guard and in 1888 helped organize the Colored High School Cadets Corps.

But one more disappointment awaited. In 1898, aged 58 and partially deaf, Fleetwood proposed to the secretary of war that he raise a "three-battalion regiment, officers included, of colored citizens as U.S. volunteers" in the Spanish-American War. Prominent Washingtonians urged President McKinley to commission Fleetwood as a colonel. The War Department did not seriously consider either idea.

Christian Fleetwood did in 1914. The chapel at the D.C. National Guard Armory is named for him, and his Medal of Honor will soon be on display in the reopened Armed Forces Hall of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

The Medal of Honor: 3,393 Tales of Valor

How could one small battle produce so many heroes? The United States had no decoration for valor until 1861 when, to boost sagging Union morale, Congress authorized a Navy Medal of Honor and then in 1862 one for the Army--for "gallantry in action and other soldier-like qualities." (The Confederacy created a Roll of Heroes but did not issue medals.)

To date, 3,393 Medals of Honor have been awarded--1,520 in the Civil War, 423 in the Indian campaigns, 342 in "wars of American expansion," (from Korea in 1871 to Nicaragua in 1927-33), 123 in World War I, 433 in World War II, 131 in Korea and 238 in Vietnam. No fewer than 194 have been awarded only for "gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

Of the 1,520 Civil War medals, 1,498 went to white men and one to a white woman--Dr. Mary Walker, who tended frontline casualties and may have been a spy. The remaining 21 went to blacks; five to sailors, one to Sgt. Decatur Dorsey at Fort Wagner, one to Sgt. William Carney at the Crater and 14 to the men at New Market Heights.

In a war in which 3 million men served and 620,000 men perished, no one can say who were most valorous. At Fort Harrison's national cemetery rest 880 men of the Richmond campaign--238 white, 59 black and 583 unknown. Were Sylvainus Maxim of Maine, Artemus Adams of Massachusetts--or Bunnell Baker or plain Abraham of the Colored Troops--among the unheralded heroes?

The Washington Post
Sunday, February 18, 1990

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Frank R. Levstik was an archives specialist for the Ohio Historical Society who did extensive research on the Civil War and the role of Blacks in the Army. He edited an article for the "Civil War Times" covering Milton Holland and two letters written during the war. Mr. Levstik also wrote an article for May, 1973 "Negro History Bulletin," on William H. Holland, Milton's brother who also served in the Civil War. Mr. Levstik also told of a third brother, James, who had a similar role in the war.

The following is the "Civil War Times" article of November, 1972, entitled "From Slavery to Freedom"--

Civil War Times
ILLUSTRATED

From Slavery to Freedom

Born a slave in 1844, Milton M. Holland and two of his brothers were bought by Bird Holland, a long-time servant and former Secretary of State of Texas. Bird Holland later served in the Confederate Army and was killed at the Battle of Sabine Roads, while the three brothers he bought from slavery were sent north to Ohio in the late 1850's. There Milton Holland was schooled at the Albany Enterprise Academy (Ohio), probably the first educational institution in the United States conceived, owned, and operated by blacks.

In 1861, Holland entered Federal service as a servant to Colones Nelson H. Van Vorhes officer in the 3rd, 18th, and 92nd Ohio Infantry Regiments. Two Years later with the acceptance of black troops into the Union Army, Holland was assigned to the 5th United States Colored Infantry, a regiment recruited in Ohio. During the war, the regiment participated in General Edward A. Wild's expedition to South Mills and Camden Court House, North Carolina, Butler's operations against Petersburg and Richmond, the capture of City Point, the Battles of New Market Heights and Fair Oaks, and the assault and

capture of Fort Fisher, North Carolina. Of the sixteen Medals of Honor awarded to black soldiers, the 5th Colored received four. One of the recipients was Sergeant Major Holland of Company C, who took command of his company at the Battle of New Market Heights on September 29, 1864, after the regular officers had fallen. General Benjamin F. Butler said of Holland: "Had it been within my power I would have conferred upon him in view of it, a brigadier-generalship for gallantry on the field."

The following letters excerpted from the Athens, Ohio, Messenger gave the folks back home some idea of what the Negro troops were going through. Nineteen years of age at their writing, Holland wrote movingly and his observations are valuable in that firsthand accounts of the Civil War by black soldiers are rare. That they are the words of a Medal of Honor winner provides further dimension to the black experience.

After the war, Holland came to work for the Federal Government, eventually rising to the position of chief of the collection division of the Sixth Auditor's office. In the 1890's he founded the Alpha Insurance Company in Washington, D.C., one of the first black insurance companies in the nation. Holland succumbed to a heart attack on May 15, 1910.

Norfolk, Va.
Jan. 19, 1864

Dear Messenger:

You will be reminded of the company of colored soldiers raised by myself in the county of Athens, Ohio, and taken to Camp Delaware, 25 miles north of Columbus, on the Olentangy. It has since been mustered into the service in the 5th Regt. U.S. Colored Troops. The regiment is organized, and has been in active service for three months. Our company is C-the color company-in which you may remember of the flag presentation, made by the kind citizens of Athens, through Mr. Moore, at which Mr. John Mercer Langston was present and received it,

pledging in behalf of the company that they would ever be true to the flag, though it might be tattered or torn by hard service, it should never be disgraced. I am happy to say that those colors have been used as the regimental colors for several months, and we had the honor of forming the first line of battle under their floating stars. We now have new regimental colors, and the old ones are laid away in my cabin, and I am sitting now beneath them writing.

The regiment though young, has been in one engagement. The men stood nobly and faced the cowardly foe when they were hid in the swamp firing upon them. They stood like men, and when ordered to charge, went in with a yell, and came out victorious, losing four killed and several wounded. The rebel loss is large, as compared with ours. As for company C she played her part admirably in the charge. Our 4th sergeant, Charles G. Stark, is said to have killed the picket guard while in the act of running away.

I must say of the 5th, that after twenty days of hard scouting, without overcoats or blankets, they returned home to camp, which the soldiers term their home, making twenty-five and thirty miles per day. Several of the white cavalry told me that no as we did, and that if they had to follow us for any length of time it would kill their horses. During that raid, thousands of slaves belonging to rebel masters were liberated. You are aware that the colored man makes no distinction in regard to persons, so I may say all belonging to slave holders were liberated. We hung one guerilla dead, by the neck, by order of Brig. Gen. Edward A. Wild, a noble and brave man, commanding colored troops--"the right man in the right place." He has but one arm, having lost his left one at the Battle of Antietam, but with his revolver in hand, he was at the head of our regiment cheering us on to victory.

One of the boys belonging to Co. D was captured and hung. He was found by our cavalry pickets yesterday and is to be buried today. We hold one of their "fair daughter," as they term them, for the good behavior of her husband, who

is a guerilla officer, toward our beloved soldiers. The soldier was found with a note pinned to his flesh. Before this war ends we will pin their sentences to them with Uncle Sam's leaden pills.

The boys are generally well, and satisfied that though they are deprived of all the comforts of home, and laboring under great disadvantages as regards pay and having families to support upon less wages than white soldiers, still trust that when they do return they will be crowned with honors, and a happier home prepared for them, when they will be free from the abuses of northern and southern fire-eaters. Though we should fall struggling in our blood for right and justice, for the freedom of our brothers in bondage, or fall in defense of our national color, the Stars and Stripes, our home and fireside will ever be protected by our old friend Gov. David Todd, by the loyalty of Abraham Lincoln, our Moses, and the all-wise God that created us. Friends at home be cheerful, cast aside all mercenary compensation. Spring forth to the call and show to the world that you are men. You have thus far shown, and still continue to show yourselves worthy of freedom, and you will win the respect of the whole nation. There is a brighter day coming for the colored man, and he must sacrifice home comforts if necessary to speed the coming of that glorious day. I will close my letter in the language of the immortal Henry--"Give me liberty, or give me death!"

Yours truly,
Milton M. Holland
O.S., Co. C, 5th
U.S.C.T.

Near Petersburg, Virginia
July 24, 1864

Dear Messenger:

It has been sometime since I had an opportunity to address you. I thought that I

should like to communicate through your columns to the friends of the soldiers in Co. C, 5th U.S.C.T., to which I belong. I will commence by stating as I did in my previous communication that Co. C, is principally composed of men from Athens and Ross Counties, and have been in active service since entering the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, liberating the slaves of both loyal and disloyal masters, and likewise confiscating other property of those who have we seen a day, however disagreeable the weather might be, that we would not go to the assistance of our brothers in bondage, and sever the chain that bound them. While I mention that we are engaged in this glorious work, I must not neglect to say that we did not pass the guerrillas who lurk in swamps and thickets unmolested. As it is not the style of Black Warriors to allow themselves to be trifled with, you may understand that we disposed of them according to the rules for the disposition of such warriors.

We have been successful in achieving the object we aimed at. We have also undergone severe marches to Bottom Bridge, within twelve miles of the Confederate Capitol. On some of those marches it rained incessantly, making it fatiguing. I have also seen men sleep, while marching. If I should say that I have been guilty of the same art myself it would not be less than truth. It seemed like imposing on green troops, but the boys bore it admirably with great patience and endurance. Near the latter part of April, we were ordered to Fort Monroe to organize into the 3rd division of the 18th Army Corps, commanded by Brigadier Gen. Edward Ward Hinks. While at Fort Monroe were reviewed by Maj. Gen. Benjamin Franklin Butler, and was classed among the best grade of white troops. All passed off very nicely, until about the 4th day of May, when an order came to boot camp, and be ready at moments warning by transport, which we quietly did in good order, as all good soldiers do. We were then awaiting the orders of the Adjutant to fall in. The Adjutant with a loud voice sang out fall in fifth: the companies were formed and moved out on the parade ground

and was formed in line of battle under supervision of the Adjutant. We moved off by the right flank to the transports and embarked, shoved in the bay a short distance from the fort, and cast anchor for the night to wait for the fleet to gather. About daybreak on the following morning all was ready, and we set sail for the James River, the fleet of gunboats taking the advance. Immediately in rear were the boats of General Butler and Hinks followed by the fifth U.S.C.T. Many things attracted our attention along the banks of the James, too numerous to mention. One I might mention particularly, was the ruins of Jamestown, the spot where the curse of slavery was first introduced into the United States. A serpent that has inserted his poisonous fangs into the body of this government, causing it to wither in its bloom. Slowly we worked our way up the winding James, until within sight of the City Point celebrated for being the Department where the exchange of prisoners is made. As we neared the shore at that point Co. C was ordered to take the advance as soon as we landed. Up the hill we marched to where the rebel flag was stationed. Down with it cried the boys, and in a moment more the flag of the glorious free could be seen floating in the breeze. The company banners was the first company flag that waved over the rebel city. Forty prisoners were captured at this place by the provost guard of the division. One platoon of our company was deployed as skirmishers and followed a short distance the retreating foe that escaped.

On the following day we began throwing up fortifications around the city, in less than sixteen days we had completed the works and was ready for some new adventure. The regiment then moved to Point of Rocks and on the 9th of June a detachment of the 1st, 5th, 6th [U.S.C.T.] under Gen. Quincy A. Gilmore made a demonstration against Petersburg, Va., we were brought into line of battle, under a most galling fire of the enemies guns, the 1st U.S.C.T. took the right, the 6th the left, and our detachment supported the artillery, in this order we advanced, while

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Gen. August V. Kautz with a superior force of cavalry made a flank movement and broke the enemies left reaching the town. Had he been supported by General Gilmore the town would have been ours on that day, with slight loss of life. But did he do it? No. He withdrew without a fight, putting the enemy on his guard and consequently allowing him to prepare for an emergency. Suffice to say that we withdrew and fell back to Point of Rocks. All passed off very quietly until the 14th, when we were summoned to make a second demonstration against the rebel city under command of Maj. Gen. William F. Smith. In a few moments we were out and on the road, we crossed the Appomattox shortly after nightfall, and lay down to rest our weary limbs. On the following morning about daybreak, we dispatched a hardy breakfast of hardtack and coffee. Orders were given then to fall in, of course we made no delay knowing duty to be before everything else, a moment before and the column was off. About sunrise our advance came in contact with the rebel pickets who discharging the contents of their pieces into our ranks, fled back to their main force. Skirmishers were then thrown out in front of the different regiments. Companies C and B were deployed in front of the 5th, other skirmishers in front of their respective regiments, forming a skirmish line in front of the line of battle. We moved forward slowly making our way clear and open, we advanced about a mile in this manner till in sight of the first line of earthworks. We were then in the open field, halted, where we kept up a brisk fire on the skirmish line until the regiments could get through the swamps and form in order again. All this while the enemy poured a galling fire of musketry, grape and canister into ranks slaying many. The order was given to forward the skirmish line one hundred paces, this being done we halted, keeping up our fire along the line. One thing that I must mention which attracted the attention of the whole division. It was that brave and daring but strange personage that rides the white charger. We could see him plainly riding up and down the rebel lines, could hear

him shouting from the top of his voice to stand, that they had only niggers to contend with. This peculiar personage seems possessed with supernatural talent. He would sometimes ride his horse with almost lightning speed, up and down his lines amid the most terrific fire of shot and shell. But when the command was given to us, "Charge bayonets! Forward double quick!" the black column rushed forward, raising the battle yell, and in a few moments more we mounted the rebel parapets. And to our great surprise, we found that the boasted Southern chivalry had fled. They could not see the nigger part as the man on the white horse presented it. We captured here one gun and caisson. Column moved out to the left in front of the second line of fortifications while the white troops took the right. We moved off in line of battle, took a position right in range of the enemies guns, in which position we remained six hours exposed to an enfilading fire of shot and shell. Just at nightfall after the placing of our guns had been effected, we were ordered to charge a second fort which we did with as much success as the first. It is useless for me to attempt a description of that evening cannonading. I have never heard anything to equal it before or since for a while whole batteries discharge their contents into the rebel ranks at once, the result was complete success.

Providence seemed to have favored us on that occasion for the casualties of Co. C, were very few only two killed and nine wounded...

Many more of the boys in the company were truck or scratched by spent and glancing balls, but not seriously hurt... These were brave boys, and the company lament their misfortune and sympathize with the bereaved wives and friends of the deceased...

M.M. Holland
O.S. Co. C, 5th
U.S.C.T.

Frank R. Levstik also wrote an article on William H. Holland, Milton's brother, which told of his career in Texas after the Civil War.

Politician and Educator

Born a slave in 1841, in Marshall, Texas, William H. Holland and his two brothers Milton and James were purchased by Bird Holland, a long-time white civil servant and Secretary of State of Texas. At the time of purchase in the late 1850's, the brothers were resident in Panola County, Texas. Bird Holland later served in the Confederate Army and was killed at the Battle of Sabine Cross Roads. His three sons bought from slavery, were sent north to Ohio just prior to the Civil War. There William and his brother Milton attended the Albany Enterprise Academy, probably the first educational institution in the United States conceived, owned, and operated by blacks. No extant information is available to date relating to Hollands' youth.

On October 22, 1864, Holland enlisted in the Sixteenth United States Colored Troops, a regiment organized at Nashville, Tennessee, which included enlistees sent from Ohio. During the war the regiment participated in the Battle of Nashville and Overton Hill, the pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River and garrison duty in Chattanooga, Eastern, and Middle Tennessee. William's brothers Milton and James enlisted in the Fifth United States Colored Troops, a regiment organized in Ohio. Brother Milton received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his role in the Battle of New Market Heights on September 29, 1864.

In 1867, Holland entered Oberlin College undertaking a course of study in the preparatory department. Although college records do not record his graduation, he did attend the institution for two years, before returning to Texas to teach school in the City of Austin and surrounding counties.

A staunch Republican, Holland soon gained an

appointment in the post office. When the Fifteenth Texas Legislature convened in April, 1876, William served as the representative from Walter County. During his term of office, Holland fathered the bill which created Prairie View Normal for the black students of the state. Largely through the efforts of Norris Wright Cuney and Holland, the Texas Legislature passed a bill on April 5, 1887, creating the Texas Institute for Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Colored Youth. Six months later, the Institute opened on a 100 acre site, two and one-half miles outside Austin. On August 15, 1887, Democratic Governor L.S. Ross appointed Holland superintendent of the institution. For the next eleven years, he remained as head of the Institute, becoming the first black man in the nation to direct a public institution for the instruction of deaf, dumb, and blind black youth. The trustees of the Institute were white, yet placed complete confidence in Holland's administrative abilities. His wife, Eliza, joined the staff in 1890 as an instructor of the deaf.

In 1898, Holland was succeeded by S.J. Jenkins, a black Democrat who remained in the superintendency until his death on April 21, 1904. Holland was subsequently reappointed and served until his death on May 27, 1907.

Holland's interest extended beyond public philanthropy to the private sector, where he started an organization in the black community known as the Friend in Need. This organization supplied financial aid to black students unable to meet educational expenses.

The Holland obituary in the Annals of the Deaf noted: "While he labored under the disadvantage of having no previous experience with the deaf, he was a man of education and intelligence and a good executive officer." A former board member spoke thus of him: "Holland never praised Holland; and every time I came in contact with him I saw a new and noble quality, that I had not before observed. Many of us have lost our trust and best friend. We pray God that the many good deeds he has done, may prove to be bread cast upon the waters....."

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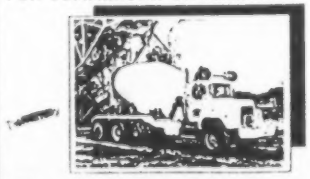

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